The Portrayal of Pakistan and Pakistanis in Indian Hindi Cinema (1947 – 2024)

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Dedication

For Ammi and Abba,
Indu Chatterji Mitha and Aboo Mitha,

The values their lives taught us are my greatest riches, they bequeathed a love of every corner of our subcontinent and its varied and colourful cultures, a celebration of difference, of innate sameness, of the strength and affection of family bonds across every border, and of an insistence to speak up.

And for all the people of our subcontinent who have struggled and sung for peace and justice

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List of Publications

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3. Mitha, Yameema et al. *Another form of Stoning (Women quarry workers).* ASR Publications, Lahore. 1989.

4. Mitha et al. *Solid Foundations, Solid Contributions (Women in the building trade)*. ASR Publications, Lahore. 1989.

5. Mitha et al. *Building your dreams (Bonded workers in the brick kilns)*. ASR Publications, Lahore. 1989.

6. Mitha et al. *Agar hai jazba-i-tameer zinda (Women labour in the informal and formal sector)* (in Urdu*)*, ASR Publications, Lahore. 1989.

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Glossary and Abbreviations

Glossary

Indo-Pak	Indo-Pak (adjective) of/or relating to India and Pakistan[1]
Arre	hey
Mullah	Muslim cleric,
Maulvi	Muslim cleric
Yaar, yar	friend, love, lover, hey man
Chullo	ok, lets go

Kinship words
(Relationship words also often reveal which religion and/or region the family is from):

Abba	Father
Abu	Father
Aiee	Mother
Ammi	Mother, mummy
Apa/Aapa/Appa	Elder sister
Appa	Elder brother
Baba	Father
Bau jee	Father
Bee jee	Mother/grandmother
Behan	sister
Behna	little sister
Beta	child, son
Bhabi	brother's wife
Bhai jaan	brother, generally elder brother, dear brother
Bhai	brother, often used to denote respect, affection, politeness
Bhaiji	respected brother
Bhaisahib	respected elder brother
Bua	fathers sister
Chacha	Father's brother
Daar ji	Short for Sardarji, father or grandfather amongst Sikhs
Dada	paternal grandfather
Dada	Brother in Bengal
Dadi	paternal grandmother
Didi	Elder sister
Fui	Fathers sister
Ji	a mark of respect, affection, politeness
Khala	Mother's sister
Maa	Mother

[1] "Collins English Dictionary — Complete & Unabridged" 2012 Digital Edition © William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1979, 1986 © HarperCollins Publishers 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012, see also https://www.oed.com/dictionary/indo-pak_adj?tab=meaning_and_use#1427555150

Mama	Mother's brother (affectionately)
Mamu	Mother's brother (correctly)
Mashi	Mother's sister
Masi	Mother's sister
Mashima	Mothers sister
Nana	Maternal grandfather
Nani	Maternal grandmother
Pishi	Fathers sister in Bengal
Pishima	Father's sister in Bengal
Pita ji	Father (formal)
Veer ji	respected brother

Other words/phrases

Love-shove	Love and all that
Samaj ki deevar	dramatic way to say "the wall of social convention"
Yahan , vahaan	Here, There
Oos par	across/the other side. Often used to refer that un-named place that is simply a mirror image of the self and the other, as in all the Kashmir films, one of which is simply titled *Yahan*. *Gold, Garam Hawa,* also refer to "*toofan vahan bhi, yahan bhi,*" "the storm is here, as well as there".

Abbreviations

AIR	All India Radio
BSF	Indian Border Security Force
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence, the Pakistani Intelligence Service
LIM	Loyal Indian Muslim
RAW	Research & Analysis Wing, the Indian Intelligence service
SRK	Shahrukh Khan /Shah Rukh Khan

Abstract

Yameema Mitha

The Portrayal of Pakistan and Pakistanis in Indian Hindi Cinema
This thesis is based on a detailed examination of the entire canon of Hindi language film, which deals with Pakistan. It chooses film as an important and understudied aspect of popular culture, that both represents and influences wider society, and which has not been analysed in the same way as other source material. The analysis is divided into three main themes. The first, where Pakistan is part of the Self, and is used for a form of introspection on Indian society. This is a genre of films that do not focus on the India-Pakistan issue, but on what the existence of Pakistan has meant for the Indian imagination and consequently, the Indian polity. In the second set of films Pakistan is framed as the Hostile Other, the very existence of the Other is villainous or evil, unjustified, or this Other is patronized, as still having to attain a maturity that can be taught by India/Indians. There are Ambiguous tropes which are open to more subjective interpretation, I view them as falling between themes, rather than amounting to a separate theme on their own. Finally, there are films where this Other is Embraced through a recognition of a common subcontinental/South Asian identity, or through rejection of the forces in power, which seek to divide; there is also a romantic exoticization. and a desire for Peace. Each theme carries within it, its own contradiction, as most films, even while expressing a dominant theme, do so through presenting a variety of tropes and strands and portrayals, and even each detailed trope may carry internal contradictions. There is the Self, the Other, and the Embrace, and each carries within itself its own contradiction.

Introduction

This introductory chapter presents briefly the significance of this study, culminating in the research questions.

I chose this particular area to study, because the India-Pakistan relationship is crucial firstly to the millions of inhabitants of both these countries, secondly, to the region as a whole, and thirdly, also globally, not least for the reason that both countries are nuclear powers. This relationship, politically, has been a hostile one even before its inception. Although the India-Pakistan conflict has been analysed in many different ways, there has been no detailed or extensive analysis of how this conflict affects, is presented in, and is effected by, the crucially important area of Indian Hindi cinema. There are reviews of groups of films, and a handful of articles and books, but to draw wider conclusions, a study of the wider canon of Hindi-language Indian film and its treatment of Pakistan is long overdue. The manner in which Pakistan and Pakistanis have been portrayed in Indian film has not received much attention.

In my view this is a critical gap given the overwhelming importance of cinema as a medium of influence in Indian society, and indeed in the subcontinent as a whole, which I go on to explore in this Introduction and also in Chapter 1. The significance of this subject to the India-Pakistan conflict stems from the scale, the reach, and the presumed and accepted influence of this medium, as I go in to explain in detail here.

The initial significance of this study stems from the fact that the Indian film industry is the largest film industry in the world both in terms of production[2] and audience.[3] Hindi films are the largest part of this production as well as of the audience.[4] It is the commercial Hindi films that are often known as “Indian cinema” or “Bollywood”, (a term disliked by many as being derivative and pejorative, and implying only frivolity) and are viewed all

[2] Dastidar, Ghosh and Elliot, 2020, 2
[3] McCarthy, 2014
[4] Basuroy, 2025

over the world.[5] Hindi is also mutually intelligible with Urdu, the lingua franca[6] in Pakistan.

This very scale illustrates its significance; in 2022, Indian film tickets sold within India, surpassed total film ticket sales of China, the United States, Mexico, and Japan all together.[7] And while the films are directed definitely and primarily to an Indian audience, Indian films are also watched in over 90 other countries. Their audience numbers many millions. "In recent years Bollywood has conquered new audiences all over the world. Bollywood literally has no borders now." [8] All these Indian and international audiences are receivers of the Indian film vision/version, in other words, the "Bollywood" version, of Pakistan. The one single largest non-Indian international audience is in Pakistan,[9] where viewers can comprehend the films without any mediation of subtitling or dubbing, entirely in the original.[10] Not even all Indian audiences can do that. This is the reach of Hindi cinema.

Pakistanis often think that Indian Hindi cinema is obsessed with Pakistan.[11] In reality, since Partition, an average of only one to two per cent of Hindi films have been made about Pakistan. And yet, particularly since the mid-nineties, there is no doubt that this average percentage has increased. Even so, to about three to five per cent a year. What is important is that Pakistan is the single regular recurring "foreign" topic that Indian films constantly return to, in many different shapes and forms. Moreover, NO other country is referred to as many times in Indian Hindi cinema, as Pakistan is. There are many other important recurring topics in Indian Hindi cinema, caste, injustice, gender, sexuality, corruption, but these are all internal topics. Pakistan, or at least many of the issues surrounding it, are like an internal issue for India, not a "foreign policy" issue. No other foreign country, however important in Indian foreign relations, ever features so regularly in Hindi cinema as Pakistan does.

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[5] Recently South Indian films have suddenly increased their international viewership exponentially.
[6] This is sometimes a controversial statement.
[7] Carollo, 2024
[8] Chatterjee, Anandita, 2021
[9] Bangladesh is another, but Hindi is still a foreign language there.
[10] Colloquial Hindi and Urdu are almost entirely mutually intelligible, "Hindustani" is used to refer to this common language.
[11] Bhutto, 2023. In fact Pakistanis are as obsessed with "Bollywood" as Indians are.

Since 1947, almost 300 Indian Hindi films have been made which reference Indo-Pakistan relations. This may not seem a huge number in 77 years, out of roughly over 15000 films.[12] As far as I have been able to ascertain, Pakistan is the only country about which three Indian films have been made that have no Indian angle or character.[13] This delineates the significance of Pakistan within Hindi cinema. But no other "foreign-oriented" subject so constantly recurs in Urdu/Hindi cinema, this is evidence of the unresolved relationship that still binds the twins born at midnight[14] whose very identities are still enmeshed with each other. This is not in essence a "foreign" theme, but is crucial to India's own identity. Again, this demonstrates the significance of Pakistan, as expressed through Hindi cinema.

How does Indian Hindi cinema, whose sway and influence on both sides of the border cannot be overestimated, [15] portray this relationship? Given that these two countries have such a hostile relationship, are often at war and are both nuclear powers, and given that Indian Hindi cinema is avidly watched in over 90 countries, how these films portray Pakistan is a significant area to study.

Cinema has a long history and life in the Indian subcontinent. With major exceptions, the stars come from dynasties, young people watch old films, and it is not useful or possible to talk about particular films in isolation without constant reference and awareness of the wider canon. To date, there was no systematic way to identify Indian films which mention Pakistan or have focused on Pakistan. There is no single comprehensive source. While many famous films have many academic articles devoted to them, lesser known films, older films, with audiences of hundreds of thousands, have not been studied. As the research for this thesis was developed, more films started coming to light, in reviews and articles, even in chance conversations, in group discussions. It is impossible to have a definitive discussion about Indian films and their effect, without seeing them in perspective.

Long before one can study what the effect of Indian Hindi cinema on Indian and Pakistani audiences is (a worthwhile project but beyond the scope of this thesis), it is necessary to

[12] Very roughly 200 films per year for 77 years
[13] Tere bin Laden (2010), Tigers (2014), Gul Maqai (2020)
[14] Rushdie, 1981
[15] Let alone the 90 odd countries in which it is watched.

look at and analyse what the films actually say, despite the polysemic nature of the medium. This carries an inbuilt assumption of audience impact, which I have substantiated in the relevant sections, most particularly in discussing the importance of film, in *Why Film, Nation building with reference to Hindi film,* in *Othering in the Context of this Research, The political Origins of Othering, Othering in film, The Other in our story, Who is the Self, The Challenges,* in *The Introspective Self, Disclaimer or positive Pakistani characters in hostile films,* and also in the *Conclusion.* But this is clearly not an audience impact or an audience reception study, which would be a different field entirely. This thesis looks at how Pakistan is portrayed, and it is important to note firstly, that the primary audience and the primary target for Indian film is the Indian audience. Secondly, Pakistanis constitute a very particular audience and thirdly there is also an international audience of many millions. How Hindi cinema represents Pakistan is significant, first of all because it effects the opinions of the millions of Indians who have never met a Pakistani, and Indian public opinion is crucial to Indo-Pakistan relations but equally important to domestic politics. The way in which Pakistan is represented in Indian film, is the primary image of Pakistan that millions of people see.

Although the focus of this thesis is on how Pakistan and Pakistani's are portrayed in Indian film, Pakistanis themselves are huge consumers of Indian Hindi-language films, even in periods where political tensions led to bans. In 1965, 18 years after Partition, Indian films were first banned in Pakistan. The ban lasted 43 years, was lifted for less than 10 years, and put in force again. But nothing at all has been able to prevent Pakistanis from devotedly and enthusiastically watching Hindi cinema, usually by widespread and often illegal methods.

> "The fact that Hindi cinema and its surrounding pop culture of music and magazines are so popular in other parts of South Asia like Pakistan and Bangladesh reinforce the Indian state's representation of itself as the regional power or hegemon in South Asia. While Pakistan and Bangladesh both ban film imports from India, there is a thriving piracy and video culture and Pakistani newspapers are filled with statements about the influence of Hindi films and

> Indian television. The popularity of Hindi cinema is articulated by the Indian press and the state as a manifestation of India's "soft power" within the region." [16]

In 2008, when the ban was first lifted, Indian films started being legally imported, the groundwork for this having been done during the time of Parvez Musharaf's "enlightened moderation" policies. New multiplex cinema houses were built and started to flourish. Consequently, more Hollywood films than previously started being imported,[17] and a new wave of Pakistani cinema too, started to prosper. But 70 per cent of the audiences were for Hindi cinema.[18] And this figure takes no account of the far greater millions of Pakistanis who cannot afford the multiplexes or streaming services but are devotees of Indian films. Pakistani audiences are important to Indian film-makers even if not commercially, and the scale of the Pakistani audience adds to the significance of this study.

Indians and Pakistanis hardly ever meet. Both countries have actively discouraged this for more than half a century. It is well-known and documented how people are surprised at the warmth and familiarity that they find across the border, particularly Indians in Pakistan. But for most people, films are the closest they get to meeting each other. Pakistanis meet every kind of Indian in Indian films, even if they are slightly cinematic versions of reality. But who are the Pakistanis that Indians meet in Hindi cinema?

Why Film?

This area of study is significant, because films are probably some of the most powerful stories of today. Film is a powerful medium in all societies, it has even more importance in a society where literacy is limited, moreover, in the sub-continent, cinema is an integral part of life, based as it is on traditional dance-drama forms, which allows it to seem familiar to the most rural audiences as well as the most sophisticated. It is also the primary source of contemporary music. Far beyond the boundaries of spoken Hindi, let alone the subcontinent, Indian films have become the modern folk culture, the new lexicon, the

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[16] Ganti, 2013, 51.
[17] Hollywood films never entirely stopped, but on their own were not enough to make cinema houses profitable, most cinema houses closed down, all film imports slowed to a trickle.
[18] Interview with Aamir Haider, Manager, Cineplex, Centaurus, Islamabad, Pakistan, on 17 June 2019 and Cinema Owners Association in The Hindu, 28.09.2016

new poetry, the new music, the new folk dance. “Hindi film (is) by far the most potent art medium in the Indian subcontinent.”[19]

The power of film was recognized long years before India and Pakistan became independent. In 1917, Lenin said “Of all art forms, cinema is the most important.”[20] In 1918, the government of British India introduced The Indian Cinematograph Act to curb elements related to the freedom movement from creeping into the films, and in 1920 Film Censor Boards were established in 4 big cities.[21] The Nazis too, are well known for their use of cinema for propaganda.[22]

Despite the fact that the Indian government, to the disappointment of many film makers, did not particularly encourage Indian cinema, however, long before Independence and Partition, Indian cinema always considered itself to have a socially responsible role, with themes ranging from freedom from colonial rule (in different guises to circumvent the censor), untouchability, secularism, widow remarriage. After Independence, it was a seamless move to be making films about the new nation, and its hopes and fears.

In newly independent and newly partitioned India, the new stories seem to have steered clear of partition, for reasons which are still being discussed. Barring notable exceptions, this is considered a big gap. But it was compensated by a huge canon of “nation-building” stories, which a priori included some kind of secularism. In the new Indian context, the stories the films told were not “just” a manifestation of culture, but different expressions of a new nationalism itself. Much of the nationalism was celebratory or exhortatory, much was also self-critical.

More recently, Debashish Chowdhury talks about Indian cinema’s outsized cultural influence which has become a temptation and a target for recent governments. [23]

[19] Bharat, 2008, 62
[20] Gazdar, 2019, 4
[21] Gazdar, 2019, 4
[22] Niven, 2018, Welch, 1983
[23] Chowdhury, 2023

India-Pakistan, history, nationalism and identity

India and Pakistan are two hostile nuclear armed neighbours who have often been at war. Just over 75 years ago, they were one country. As their British rulers departed, they drew a line on a map, and created two independent countries, drawing a border that ran through provinces, villages, farms, houses, clans, communities, cultures and families, leaving chaos, confusion and slaughter in their wake. The stated reason to divide them was that they were two nations, and therefore could not live together. The "Two-nation theory" was *the raison d'etre* of Pakistan's existence.[24] This theory highlighted all the differences between Hindus and Muslims. It was the ideological foundation for creating a whole system of "othering", all of which was to have stemmed from a single difference, religion. Other than this distinguishing characteristic, it might seem that there was too much in common. Ethnicity and language, both considered markers of nations, were common, as was a shared history, and this slippery, intangible, all-encompassing thing called culture, which included literature, dress, food, popular culture, music, song, theatre, film, poetry, festivals and the arts in general, as well as values, and a way of living. The adherents of this theory proclaimed that religious difference created differences in ethnicity, language, history and culture. The massive exchange of population was shortsightedly unpredicted, but another major flaw in this theory were the millions of Muslims who stayed in India, whom the physical borders of Pakistan could not accommodate, even if they or Pakistan wished them to.

Both these new multi-ethnic, multilingual, multicultural nations, were very much 'imagined communities'. Their population had identities which were diverse, and within this diversity, there were also many important commonalities, which also stretched across the new border. Both are examples of the nation being created first and then the community having to be imagined. Both countries imagined a national identity, which in reality was new, and needed to be constructed, to a large extent in conflict with each other, India seeking to create a secular unifying multicultural identity in direct conflict with Pakistan constructing an identity based on the divisions of the two nation theory and the single unifying factor of religion.

[24] The person who first used this term was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, in 1866, at Meerut. VD Savarkar (1883-1966), the Father of Hindutva, subscribed to a similar viewpoint.

In the specific context of the creation of the Indian and Pakistani identities, an axiomatic Indian secularism (now seriously contested) and an equally axiomatic Pakistani religious-Muslimness is central to the understanding of these national identities. The role of secularism in India, and the role of Islam in Pakistan were cornerstones of the respective new national identities, and were also in direct opposition to each other. The elaboration of ideological detail in both countries (specially India) is complicated and controversial, but a simplistic acceptance of both was, specially in the early years, a key component of the respective country's national identity, specially as presented in Indian cinema. For the purpose of this thesis, I will take at face value that religion and Indian secularism both have a role in creating identity/othering in both India and Pakistan, and are central to the creation of national identity; a more detailed discussion of the theoretical underpinning of these is not relevant to my analysis and would be outside the scope of this Phd.

A new national identity comes about in different ways, some constructed intentionally by the state,[25] some by other vested interests, and some by other forces at play. Of these forces, mass media is crucial, acknowledged and used by many nations, by other actors, and by pure commercial interests. Of this mass media, film is absolutely primary in South Asia. Although radio was powerful and more pervasive and eventually television provided competition to films, film was older, and is powerful in all societies, but in the subcontinent, not only is "film… a social institution: it is a medium of education"[26]; also film occupies a most special place and position in popular culture[27]. Film watching, in theatres and in homes is an activity around which families congregate, around which social, political, sartorial, musical, literary, cultural discussions take place, where mega-ideas are presented, it is also an expression of the Self and its many Others. The trouble was and remains, that Hindi cinema, that tells all the stories, is still, if now precariously or barely, perhaps the most multifaceted and prominent manifestation of the shared culture of the two "nations", a contradiction in itself.

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[25] Obviously other tools are also important, radio was extremely influential, the education system is a crucial site of creating this new identity, so was language, as part of the education system, and of mass media.

[26] P.V Rajamannar's (first Chairman, Sangeet Natak Akademi) Foreword to the first edition of R.M Ray, 2009, 14

[27] It is popularly said that India and Pakistan have three national passions, Bollywood, cricket and weddings.

Nationalism, by its very nature, is a process of Othering, even as it is purveyed as a way of bonding together people in a common identity. India's task of creating a nation out of great diversity was already a difficult one, but the very existence of Pakistan made it doubly so. To accept and acknowledge Pakistan, struck at the heart of India's ideology, and made it difficult to showcase how an Indian identity could be inclusive of all religions and specially the Muslim. So does Indian film cite or create a common culture and identity and ethics whose very embrace can threaten the otherness that the Pakistani national identity is seeking to create? Or does it intentionally or unintentionally create a hostile othering that only serves to propel the hostilities of the past into the present and the future?

Fine Tuning the tropes

This dissertation analyses how Indian Hindi cinema has depicted Pakistan and Pakistanis from 1947 to 2023, and develops and presents some classification of these films. Drawing on over 250 films which explicitly reference Pakistan or Pakistanis, it seeks to offer a series of lens through which to understand the core repeating themes.

For this purpose it did not seem useful to classify the films by the traditional genres of romance, action, comedy, drama, thriller, horror etc. Hindi cinema in particular is based on the *masala*[28] film, which means that it is a combination of all genres and more, it has something in it for everyone, given that it is traditionally family entertainment. [29] To do a classification of films as having hostile or reconciliatory themes would be to miss the finer detail of the different portrayals, and be so broad a categorization as to be useless. To classify the films on the basis of portrayals of Pakistan and Pakistanis as hostile, reconciliatory or even neutral might seem a clear starting point. However the reality is that each film is complicated by different strands within, it is these individual strands, and individual portrayals, scenes, and characters, rather than the films as a whole, that can be classified as Hostile, Reconciliatory and Neutral, (and more) tropes. Even so, such a broad generalization is a blunt instrument, because the portrayals are far more complex.

[28] Masala means a combination of spices
[29] See detailed discussion on this in Chapter 1, in the section on India-Pakistan

This thesis presents an overview of how Indian Hindi cinema presents Pakistan and Pakistanis, and examines particular tropes identified for their expressions of Self (given the existence of the Other), Othering and Sameness, and of their inherent contradictions. It explores whether the very need to express Othering speaks of commonalities being denied.

The broad categorization of Hostile, Reconciliatory, Neutral (and even Ambiguous) tropes is divided into more detailed tropes through which this Othering is expressed.

I refer to this broad categorization of tropes as Themes, in order to differentiate them from the more detailed, fine-tuned, elaborated tropes, which I continue to refer to as tropes. A theme is a collection of tropes. And each theme carries within it, its own contradiction. It's important to stress that most films do not express a single theme, but a variety of these though different strands and tropes, some of which may not fit neatly into the broad themes. There is a genre of films that do not focus on the India-Pakistan issue, but on what the very existence of Pakistan has meant for the Indian imagination and consequently, the Indian polity, in what I have termed as (an) introspective trope/s, these are not focused on a hostility or reconciliation. Secondly, there is a hostile Othering, where the very existence of the Other is considered unjustified, or the Other is patronized, and there are a variety of tropes that express this perspective. Finally, there is at times an Embrace of this other, a recognition, an embrace of the common man but a rejection of the divisive forces in power, in part there is exoticization, and these are some of the reconciliatory tropes.

These portrayals are expressions of the Self, the Other, and the Embrace. And each expression carries within itself, elements of contradiction. A focus on the Self involves introspection – about Indian society, secularism, the Indian state, and the Other. Othering can be and is, in this case, often hostile – but that hostility can have many layers and areas of focus. It is important therefore to give consideration to the many ambiguous tropes and how we understand them in this wider context. Among the reconciliatory tropes too, many are positive, but again there are contradictions, a focus on sameness and reconciliation can also be a denial of Pakistani agency. Despite assumptions that hostility dominates, there are films which acknowledge Pakistan and Pakistanis as having political and social agency, which do not rule out a reconciliatory embrace - each of the other. So

it is more relevant and useful for analysis to elaborate the discussion through an assessment of tropes.

The thesis addresses this complexity through the exploration of a sets of inter-related questions. It asks:

(1) How does Indian Hindi Cinema create, or represent a hostile othering that can serve to propel the hostilities into the present or even project and incite hatred?
(2) How does Indian film represent or create a common culture and identity and ethics (ethos), and does such an embrace threaten the very otherness that the Pakistani national identity is seeking to create, or alternatively does it reflect and encourage peace and harmony between the two countries and peoples?

FINDINGS:

The complexity of the portrayals has been my first, most pervasive and significant finding. It is in this complexity that the portrayal becomes interesting. Therefore, while hatred may be created simply, it is often unconsciously layered. Secondly, the iterative process led to the fine tuning and elaboration of different patterns of portrayal within these very vast tropes/themes that my thesis and analysis is based on. The identification of these (sub) tropes is in itself a major finding of the thesis, as many portrayals do not fit neatly into the simplistic broad themes. Thirdly, the identification of Ambiguous and Introspective categories of tropes is another finding of the research. The final contribution of the thesis is the relating of these tropes to the idea of Self, the Other and the Embrace. More detailed findings as to how films actually illustrate and portray these tropes identified are discussed in the relevant chapters.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the significance of the topic to be researched, the logic which led to the formulation of the research questions, and alluded to the findings of this research.

This thesis is then structured as follows. Chapter One, discusses the relatively underexplored importance of Indian film as a source material for political analysis and also sets this film in the wider context of the Indian Pakistan political relationship. Chapter Two discusses the methodological choices, including the selection of films, and the development of the lens through which they are analysed. The following chapters contain the detail of the empirical analysis of the films. Chapter Three discusses the Introspective trope and the different genres of films through which it is expressed, Chapter Four discusses Hostile tropes. Chapter Five, Ambiguous tropes, which are more open to subjective interpretation, and we end with the Reconciliatory tropes, in Chapters Seven and Eight, including those which are hopeful of an Embrace, and end with a final Conclusion.

This chapter has served as a brief introduction to the topic, the research questions and the findings, and laid out the structure of the thesis and its chapters.

Chapter 1 – Contextualising Pakistan in Indian Hindi Film

The aim of this PhD is to examine how commercial Indian Hindi cinema has portrayed Pakistan and Pakistanis from 1947 to 2023, to develop and present some classification of these depictions, and to develop a more holistic perspective of how the canon of film has treated this vital political and social relationship, within a broad framework which explores both Othering and Sameness. This chapter will expand on the significance of the topic and contextualize Pakistan in Indian film, providing the background and context for the detailed analysis in the following chapters.

Indian Film in the World, and Pakistan in Indian Film

The Indian film industry is the largest film industry in the world in terms of production[30] and audience[31] and over the period examined by this thesis Hindi films represent the largest single language group of films in terms of production as well as of the audience[32], very roughly between 20 - 30 per cent of all films made in India.[33] Although cinema was made in a number of languages even before independence, "Hindi cinema's prominence in the production of the All-India film" was seen "as performing an integrating national role, [which] contributed to its status as India's national cinema." [34]

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[30] Dastidar and Elliot, 2020, 2, In 2019, 2446 films were certified, Film Federation of India, 2019
[31] McCarthy, 2014, Ganti, 2004, 43.
[32] Tamil films now give competition. Basuroy, 2025
[33] In 2017, 364 Hindi films out of 1986 Indian films total (almost 20%), in 2018, 305 Hindi films of 1813 total Indian, (almost 17%), and 2019, 499 out of 2446, (over 20 %) . In 2023, 33% films were Hindi, 20% Tamil.
Film Federation of India, 2017
286 out of 1986, Patil et al, 2021
Film Federation of India, 2018
Film Federation of India', 2019
It's difficult to compare 2022 , the basis for compilation is different
These include all kinds of films, but they serve to illustrate the point.
"Indian Languages world cinema stats", screenville.blogspot.com
Although earlier years sometimes show a larger number of Tamil and Telegu films, but the share at the box office in India is the highest for Hindi films. See above and Basuroy, 2025
[34] Woods, 2011, 90

Most Indians and Pakistanis never meet. They know each other most familiarly through films, other than news and now social media. The films present thousands of kinds of Indians, even if they are a filmic version of reality, who are seen by Pakistanis. The portrayal of Pakistanis is limited to the few films in which they feature, which usually present a reductive and stereotypical range of characters, because of the political climate and because filmmakers themselves have little knowledge of Pakistan and Pakistanis. The standard terrorist, extremist, military man, "covered" woman[35], aristocrat, are the Pakistanis that most Indians know through cinema. "We are either a fantasy created by celluloid or an ugly farce, as depicted by angry (*news)* anchors. …." [36] This is not likely to have much effect on Pakistanis, who know their reality, and may be amused or irritated by the stereotypes presented in Hindi cinema. However the effect on Indian audiences who know no real Pakistanis, has the potential to be more significant. It is not the purpose of this study to explore audience impact, or to seek to establish causal relationships in either direction between film and public opinion or sentiment. However film represents an enormous cultural sector in India, in both production and audience. Yet it is very underexplored, compared to written sources, despite it's far greater reach, as a medium for its political content which both reflects and represents a view of Pakistan and Pakistanis. Before we can even began to untangle the possible two-way influences of film on public opinion and vice versa, we need a more comprehensive understanding of the canon of film itself. Seeking to strengthen that comprehensive understanding of the films themselves is the purpose of this thesis.

Although Hindi films are directed definitely and primarily to an Indian audience, they are watched by millions in over 90 countries. "Bollywood literally has no borders now."[37]

> "Not relying on an organised distribution system, the global circulation of Indian films has for many years been (and still is) part of an informal economy, with pirated VHS video cassettes, DVDs, and eventually films illegally downloaded from the internet, being regularly sold and/or rented in markets and shops."[38]

[35] Discussed in Chapters 6 and 7
[36] Siddiqua, 2015
[37] Chatterjee, Anandita, 2021
[38] Clini, 2022

"Hindi films are available in Afghanistan, the U K, U.S.A, Zambia, Botswana, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Fiji" [39] along with China, Nigeria, Russia, Fiji, Japan, Albania, Turkey and Nicaragua! All these Indian and international audiences are receivers of the Indian filmic vision - the "Bollywood" version - of Pakistan. And the single largest part of this international audience is the Pakistani audience, the single largest non-Indian audience.[40]

After the cataclysmic events of Partition in 1947, for the next 43 years, till 1991, there were less than fifteen films identified in this research, which actually (some barely) mention Pakistan.[41] Of these, only in about six is there any Pakistani character of substance, in the rest, Pakistan/Pakistanis are shadowy characters, momentary presences, allegorical figures, or simply references.[42] Bharat and Kumar write that it was after *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973) [43] that "many films, both good and bad, both hits and flops, were made with Pakistan as the central theme, or at least the central reference point."[44], but my research has been able to find less than 15 films in the 18 years from *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973) till *Henna* (1991), and it is only after 1991, that more films featuring Pakistan started being made.

Pakistanis often think that Indian Hindi cinema is obsessed with Pakistan.[45] But out of the 364 Hindi films made in 2017[46], less than a dozen reference Pakistan[47]. In 2018, out of 305,[48] about ten mentioned Pakistan.[49] In 2019, about eight films mention Pakistan. [50] These numbers are a bare two to three percent, a handful. In the 75 year period that I am looking at, even taking a very rough average of 200 Hindi films a year, this is roughly 15,000 films. Of these I have found less than 300 films referring to Pakistan, some simply in one sentence. That is about one to two per cent.

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[39] Rahman, 2011, 1
[40] Bangladesh is another, but Hindi is a foreign language there
[41] See Appendix 2
[42] *Lahore* (1949), *Chhalia* (1960), *Prem Pujari* (1970), *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973), *Garam Hawa* (1974), *Aakraman* (1975)
[43] **NOT** to be confused with *Hindustan ki kasam* **(1999**)
[44] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, x
[45] Bhutto, 2023. In fact Pakistanis are as obsessed with "Bollywood" as Indians are.
[46] Film Federation of India 2017
[47] See Appendix 1
[48] Film Federation of India 2018
[49] See Appendix 1
[50] See Appendix 1

And yet, particularly since the mid-nineties, not only is there no doubt that this average percentage has gone on increasing, but Pakistan is the single regular recurring "foreign" topic that Indian films constantly return to, in different shapes and forms. After 1996, not a single year has passed in which at least one film mentioning Pakistan has not been made. In 2008, 2009, and 2017, 8 films (at least) were made each year featuring Pakistan, in 2018, 7. In the years 1999, 2000, 2010, 2016, 2019, 2021 and 2023, at least 6 each year. In 2007, 2012, 2013, 2015, at least 5 each year. [51]

No other country is referred to as many times in Hindi cinema as Pakistan. There are many other important recurring topics in Indian cinema, caste, poverty, injustice, gender, corruption, sexuality, but they are all internal topics. Pakistan, or at least many of the issues surrounding it, are like an internal issue for India. 50 years after Partition, LK Advani[52] said that because of the ideological and theological basis on which Pakistan was created, "unity, emotional integration, harmony and a durable peace *within* India[53] have proved elusive.[54] No other foreign country – not England as the former ruler, or China, as a maverick neighbour, or Bangladesh, sometimes considered a protégé, or the US, as a superpower, or Russia, as a powerful ally, or other complicated neighbours like Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar, or countries like the UK, the US, Canada, or the Middle East, which have substantial Indian diaspora populations, ever feature so regularly in Hindi cinema as Pakistan does. Films are made about Pakistan, have Pakistani characters and sometimes Pakistani actors/stars and musicians. Salman Rushdie has likened the two countries to twins, born at midnight on Independence, whose lives and histories are forever enmeshed and entangled with each other.[55] They can separate their houses, become independent adults with their own families, but they cannot get away from each other, and the unbreakable tangible and intangible tangles of their origins.

In a review of *Pathaan* (2023), Menon writes ,

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[51] See Appendix 1
[52] LK Advani was an Indian politician, Deputy Prime Minister of India from 2002 to 2004, the longest serving Minister of Home affairs, and the longest serving Leader of the Opposition. He was a member of the Hindu nationalist RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) since his childhood, and a founder and the longest serving President of the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party, the current ruling party). He was a Sindhi born in Karachi who migrated to India at Partition.
[53] italics mine
[54] Kazmi, 1998, 12
[55] Rushdie, 1981

> "Bollywood films do not obsess over Chinese villains because India does not care about the Chinese other than as objects of not-so-casual racism. But "India" (by which I mean "North India," the setting for much Bollywood cinema) is obsessed with Pakistan because Pakistan and India were, in the not-so-distant past, one country. Pakistan and India are phantom limbs of one another, each one twitching in memory of the other's loss. The "obsession" …. is based on this psychic loss that is the basis of both love and longing on the one hand (many Bollywood aficionados were refugees from Pakistan), and hate and violence on the other (this is why "Pakistan" can be used as a bogey to mobilise hate crimes against Muslims in India). For better and for worse, then, India and Pakistan are joined at the hip: a fantasy of unity and a horror of partition. And this is why Pakistan plays a leading role in Bollywood cinema."[56]

Tere bin Laden (Without you, Laden), [57] (2010), is a political satire on a young Pakistani's obsession to go to America, sympathetic only to its protagonist, a loveable rogue. The film is entirely based in Pakistan , the characters are almost entirely Pakistani with the odd American and Afghan thrown in. There is no Indian, nor does India have any role in the film. *Gul Maqai* (2020) is a film about Malala Yousafzai of Pakistan, *Tigers* **(**2014) was a film about a Pakistani whistleblower who had been employed by Nestle in Pakistan. *Gul Maqai* and *Tigers* present the Pakistani protagonists in a positive light, and *Tere bin Laden* in an affectionate light. As far as I know, these are the only commercial Indian Hindi films to be made entirely about another country in which there is no Indian character or role whatsoever. This appears to be against all the received wisdom about what makes a film possible to relate to or identify with. Or, then perhaps, is it so seamless for Indians to identify with Pakistanis?

How Hindi cinema represents Pakistan is important, because it effects the opinions of the millions of Indians who have never met a Pakistani. Kazmi quotes Chandan Mitra naming nine Hindi film directors saying that when the "history of the twentieth century is written" they will be counted amongst those who have shaped the modern Indian psyche.[58] Film greatly influences opinion on what is both a domestic and a foreign policy issue.

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[56] Menon, 2023
[57] Word play on Osama bin Laden
[58] Kazmi, 1998, 12

> "…. the intricate relationship between (India's) foreign policy and its cinematic representation is more important now than ever before. Considering the ever-expanding reach of the Indian film industry, its portrayal of India's closest allies and oldest enemies have the potential to define the future of these relationships. Thus, it is safe to say that the future of India's foreign affairs will be shaped at both the diplomat's desk and the table-read for the next big Bollywood film." [59]

Not only does cinema affect and reflect foreign policy, it also affects and reflects domestic issues and policy towards 200 million Indian Muslims. [60] Although it is not within the scope of this thesis, Indian films must also affect the opinions of Pakistanis who watch them, and finally, these films influence perceptions of their international audience too, as it may be the only representation of Pakistanis that they are ever exposed to. How Pakistan is represented in Hindi film, this is the image of Pakistan that millions of people receive.

In the final analysis, why is this important? Because issues of identity and consequent Othering, do not only create conflict within countries, they create borders, and the conflict then has the potential to become international.[61] Bharat and Kumar say, "…. one of the most crucial political and historical relationships in the continent does not have merely a limited 'localized' value only pertinent to the sub-continental scholar." [62] This region is a nuclear flashpoint, whose hostilities can affect the whole world. In addition, it deeply affects the lives of millions living in the Indian subcontinent.

The origins of Indian Cinema

Short documentaries had been made in India from 1898 onwards, in Kolkata and Maharashtra. Dadasaheb Phalke, a Maharashtrian, is celebrated for the first Indian feature film, *Raja Harishchandra*,[63] made in 1913, in Bombay, a cosmopolitan city even at that

[59] Johny, 2021
[60] "Muslim population in India is nearly 20 crore [200m] in 2023:". The Economic Times. 21 July 2023
[61] Resende 2020, 2
[62] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, xii
[63] Sometimes contested, Chakravarty, 1994, 35

time. It was a Hindu religious mythological tale, set within the prevalent aesthetic of Parsee theatre of the time, which was already an inclusive and cosmopolitan genre.[64]

Cinema in India, "assumed the dimensions of a major socio-cultural force".[65] It was a modern phenomenon with modern baggage, mechanics/mechanisms and tools. Unlike the indigenous traditional classical art forms, music, dance, literature, painting, even sculpture, which were the preserve of particular castes, cinema brought together everyone who could purchase a ticket, in one space.[66] It did not require literacy. It cut across hierarchy and class.[67] Similarly too, not just the audience, but the production of cinema. The people who came together to make cinema, did not tend to be traditionalists, they were people who were moved and excited by this new medium, and by progress and science. But, they were conscious of the audience, and that kept them rooted, rooted to indigenous interests. The more cinema became widespread, the more important it was to be aware of the interests of the audience, who bought the ticket, and thus financed the project, and this remains entirely true even today.

Alam Ara, was the first "talkie", produced in 1931 by Ardeshir Irani, a Parsee and Abdul Ali Yusuf, a Muslim. [68] The story was written by Joseph David, [69] also from Bombay, and was based on a Persian folk tale. The language was "Urdu", the language of Parsee theatre in Bombay at that time.[70] (Urdu being a mixture of a language, a lingua franca of the educated classes, but intelligible to all). The hero was Prithviraj Kapoor,[71] a Hindu Pushtoon from Peshawar, with progressive/socialist leanings, one of the founders of IPTA. The heroine was Zubeida, the daughter of Fatima Begum, who was a director, actress, screen writer with her own production house. She was a wife of the Nawab of Sachin and her daughters were well known actresses. Zubeida was apparently paid more than some of her male counterparts, and married Maharaj Narsingir Dhanrajgir, their children have Muslim first names and Hindu surnames. One of her granddaughters married a Kerala Christian and the family is still linked to the Indian film industry. Prithviraj Kapoor's family is at the centre of the film industry. His son, star actor Shashi

[64] Acharya, 2015
[65] Baskaran, 2002
[66] There is an interesting portrayal of this in the Indian film *Swades* (2004)
[67] Baskaran, 2002
[68] Gazdar, 8
[69] Saxena, 2019
[70] Hansen, 2016
[71] Sen, 2016

Kapoor, married an Englishwoman Jennifer Kendall, (sister of Felicity Kendall) whose family were associated with theatre. One of the reigning queens of Indian cinema, who transitioned from the silent films to the talkies was Ruby Myers, known by her film name, Sulochna, a Jewish "Eurasian", to whom a 2013 Indian postage stamp was dedicated. At the same period, another Muslim woman "Jaddanbai, mother of the future star Nargis, …. (was a) well-known former courtesan, (and) had left that context behind to become a recording star, … subsequently set up her own film company," [72] Sangeet Films.

I cite this representative glimpse to show how from its inception the Indian cinema industry was a cosmopolitan and secular place where all of India's people participated. Such patterns continue to this day, "prominent film families" encompass different cultures and religions. Many language and regional groups are represented and all religions participate in strength. Naturally, there have been prominent Hindus, but equally prominent Muslims, Christians, Parsees, Jews, atheists, strong women, non-Indians, even foreigners and others. From the very earliest stages, Muslims were heavily involved in the film industry, and continued to be so prominently when the talkies came along, in the Urdu/Hindi/Hindustani film industry of (then) Bombay. Bombay, and even Kolkata/Calcutta were cosmopolitan cities, but particularly so Bombay. Many different Indian communities, even some non-Indians, and all of major religions of India were represented here, and came to be similarly represented in one of its most colourful and landmark industries. One of the most popular and powerful music teams in Indian cinema and in the music scene in India is the Shankar Ehsan Loy trio (Hindu, Muslim, Christian), and AR Rahman was born a Hindu, who later converted to Islam, and so contains both these traditions within himself.

"The rise of cinema …. coincided with a period of ….. growth of Indian [73]….. anti-colonial nationalisms developed and consolidated through articulations of cultural and political nationalist movements."[74] The British finalized the Cinematography Act in 1920, as the films were getting too rebellious, although there had been restrictions initially too.[75] Kissing was acceptable in Indian films at that time, - the authorities were more concerned with politics. In a way that no other medium had done before, films

[72] Bhaumik, 123–124
[73] and Irish
[74] Woods, 22
[75] Baskaran, 2002

began to influence public opinion on matters relating to nationalism, social reforms and war.[76] "Cine-journal Filmindia complained in 1945, that even framed photographs of national leaders were cut (out) from films." [77] Gandhiji was the "ultimate taboo", and despite the fact that he did not approve of cinema, *Bhakta Vidur* (1921), made in Madras, was the first film banned in India, because although it told stories from the Mahabharata, it basically portrayed Gandhiji! *Thyagabhoomi* (1939) was banned for the same reason almost 20 years later too.[78] The censor found veiled metaphors to refer to the British occupiers, in *Umaji Naik* (1926), *Toran* (1931), *Swarajya* and *Apna Ghar* (1942) *Kismet* (1944)[79] and many others. The censor was most sensitive to anti-British sentiments but also to depictions of Indian princes, labour, communist ideas, Gandhian ideas and Hindu-Muslim relations.[80] For the *Kismet* song, *Door hato ae duniyawalon,* arrest warrants were issued against Kavi Pradeep and composer Anil Biswas, other songs were excised.[81] Filmmakers were forced to limit themselves to non-controversial entertainment, perhaps the origin of escapist cinema in India.[82]

The theme of national unity started coming in around the late 1930's, while India was still under British rule, very much a post-colonial construct in response to communalism and division. From here on, it stayed as a major theme in the Indian film industry. Initially, while the British ruled India, it was simple, the clearcut formula was the united Indians and the ruling British.

> "In the 1940s, the policing of Indian cinema grew more stringent. Out of 1,774 films seen by the Bombay censors in 1943, 25 required modification before they could be released; that number went up to 464 (out of 3,099) by 1948."[83]

The Bombay based film industry was one of the products and markers of the common culture, encompassing actors, writers, directors, producers, musicians, cinematographers, technicians, backstage workers and stories of every religion and region, classical and folk and "pop" music and dance.

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[76] ibid
[77] Bhatia, 2018
[78] ibid
[79] ibid and Vittal, 2018
[80] Bhatia, 2018
[81] Vittal, 2018
[82] Baskaran, 2002
[83] Bhatia, 2018

Indian Hindi Film in Pakistan

The focus of this thesis is Hindi film produced in India, and how Pakistan and Pakistani's are portrayed. While produced for a largely Indian audience, the films are widely watched in Pakistan itself. In 1954, restrictions were put on the screening of Indian films in Pakistan, and in 1965, 18 years after Partition, Indian films were banned. The ban lasted 43 years, but really the only period that Pakistanis were seriously "deprived" of Hindi films was the 6 year period between the two wars of 1965 and 1971, when only a few hundreds (including cinema writers and directors, with pen and pad) could travel to Kabul to see Indian films. In 1972, immediately after the 1971 war, even while India held 93,000 Pakistani POWs, India launched a serious cultural propaganda offensive through Doordarshan Amritsar, which showed not only Indian films, but programmes of Indian film songs [84], already familiar to Pakistanis through All India Radio (AIR). When the first film, *Pakeezah* (1972) was shown on DD Amritsar, Pakistanis travelled from all over the country to see this film, rich people coming from Karachi by air, and there was a run on upgrading TV antennae to make sure that they could catch Amritsar TV.[85] Then videos arrived, and the illegal video trade in Indian films had the same drama as the drugs trade later did.[86] Quite soon, such videos were being openly sold, later, dvds and videos were openly pirated and sold in prestigious shops as well as in dirty little bazaars for a pittance. In (about) 2008[87], this fig leaf of a ban was lifted for less than 10 years, and then put in force again, in 2016 at the time of the Pathankot incident, it was lifted briefly for a few months and put in place again after the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.[88]

But neither the growing Pakistani film industry, nor the ban, nor years of hostility, nor even 93000 POWs, prevented Pakistanis from devotedly, enthusiastically, obsessively, compulsively, and repeatedly, watching Hindi cinema, mostly by illegal methods. While Pakistan and Bangladesh both ban film imports from India,[89] there is a thriving piracy culture and Pakistani newspapers are filled with statements and articles about the

[84] Chittarhar
[85] Interview with Aamir Haider, Manager, Cineplex, Centaurus, Islamabad, Pakistan, on 17 June 2019
[86] ibid
[87] In the pipeline since 2006
[88] Farooq, 2018
[89] In Bangladesh Indian films are generally banned, but occasionally certain films are given special dispensation to be screened. Roy, 2023

(generally detrimental) influence of Hindi films and Indian television on impressionable Pakistanis.[90] The popularity of Hindi cinema is articulated by the Indian press and the state as a manifestation of India's "soft power" within the region."[91] In 2008, the ban was lifted. Indian films started being legally imported, the groundwork for this having been done during the time of Parvez Musharaf's "enlightened moderation". New multiplex cinema houses were built in Pakistan and started to flourish. More Hollywood films then previously were also imported [92] and a new wave of Pakistani cinema too, started to prosper, as the dormant film-theatre-going culture revived. In 2016, when the next ban on Indian films came into force, cinema owners were adamant that this ban on Indian films would shut down the new cinema houses, as 70 per cent of the ticket sales were for Indian films.[93] And this takes no account of the far greater millions of Pakistanis who cannot afford the multiplexes but are devotees of Indian films, and so use the many other avenues available.

"There is no popular cultural art form that is so much a part of, ….. the 'collective consciousness' of not only Indian but also Pakistani patrons, all deeply invested in Hindi film celebrities and all avidly consuming Hindi films…."[94] Pakistanis watch Hindi cinema because,

> "There were no divisions here between 'Muslims', 'Hindus', 'Sikhs', or 'Pakistanis' and 'Indians'—all of us identified with the characters and found meaning in the narratives. The films testified to the fact that all were culturally and socially one. We saw them as a universal symbol of our subcontinental identity, a lifeline for the cultural survival of the Asian community….. But more than that, they also conveyed the problems of the society we had left behind." [95]

Although Ziauddin Sardar is writing about "subcontinentals/desis" in Britian, this held just as true within Pakistan, the language, the music, the songs, the issues, the problems, the corruption, the position of women, the aesthetics, the music, the heroes and heroines,

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[90] Ganti, 2013, 51.
[91] ibid
[92] Hollywood films never entirely stopped, but on their own were not enough to make cinema houses profitable, most cinema houses closed down, all film imports slowed to a trickle.
[93] In 2018/2019, the Pakistan government, recognizing the ongoing financial disaster for cinema owners made an effort to promote Turkish films, coming full circle in the creation of a national identity based on commonalities with Muslim countries and NOT with India.
[94] Bharat 2024, 2,3
[95] Nandy, 1998, 21

dress and "culture" made these films "our" films, in my childhood, we referred to them as "Urdu" films, unconscious of the difference. This is widely known among film-makers, and is part of the story of Hindi film.

Why Film?

Films are some of the most powerful story formats of today, and increasingly so.[96]

> "[T]he subcontinent's cinema grew as a blend of the motion picture technique with the standard contents of indigenous theatre, it acquired certain features unique to itself: in particular, song and dance numbers became essential and integral parts of the feature film. This pattern allowed film to seem familiar to the most un-urbanised audiences as well as the most sophisticated. The pattern continues to this day."[97]

Hindi cinema is also the primary source of Indian contemporary music, an integral and vital ingredient of Indian films. Film is a powerful medium, and as Nehru said, with much regret, in India (and I am extrapolating that to the subcontinent) it had a greater influence than books and newspapers put together.[98] Indian film, is *the* cultural artefact par excellence, both drawing on and creating culture and spanning the range from the intellectual to the popular, there is something for everyone, from Guru Dutt to Raj Kapoor, from Satyajit Ray to Karan Johar, from Anubhav Sinha to Vivek Agnihotri, from Shyam Benegal to Tarun Mansukhani. Far beyond the boundaries of spoken Hindi, let alone the subcontinent, Hindi films are the modern folk culture, the new lexicon, the new poetry, the new music, the new folk dance, all over the subcontinent and beyond. "Hindi film, (is) by far the most potent art medium in the Indian subcontinent."[99] "Culture is political and politics is cultural. …(and) the cultural stories all of us tell, …. are political."[100]

The power of film was recognized by many types of political systems - the Bolsheviks, by the British government in India, by the Nazis. As early as 1922, the "Racial Observer"

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[96] With the rise of the OTTs as well
[97] Gazdar, 2019, xvii
[98] Ray, 2009, 27
[99] Bharat in Bharat and Kumar 2008, 62
[100] Weber, 2005, 188.

had a section on Film Criticism. …. by 1930 the NSGWP [101] had established a film department. The Nazi's considered film "…. without question the most powerful" means of propaganda.[102] Hitler and Mussolini used cinema as an important ideological weapon, Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the will* was commissioned by the Nazi's.[103] In the 1930s, the Frankfurt school held that the "culture industry" was driven by the same commercial imperatives as any capitalist commodity,[104] and Adorno and Horkheimer, by the 70s, added that the culture industry specifically provided ideological legitimation of the existing capitalist societies and of integrating individuals into this particular way of life., by normalising it beyond question. [105]

The Indian government, however, did not initially exploit film as overt propaganda. Gandhiji disapproved of films, although he could not deny their power. "…..I have never been to a cinema. …. the good, if it has done any at all, remains to be proved."[106] Later, recognizing its power, he said: "If I began to organise picketing in respect of (the evils of cinema), I should lose my caste, my mahatma-ship...! …. films are often bad. About the radio I do not know."[107] He did support socially progressive films like *Achhut* (1940).[108]

But LK Advani,[109] writes Kazmi, "who was for many years the film critic of the RSS mouthpiece, *Organizer,* has a vivid sense of the power of the image." [110] His daughter Pratibha Advani, writing years later for the RSS journal, says about cinema, "As an art form that strikes the chords of both emotion and intellect, the power of cinema is unmatched." "For most Indians, cinema is the enduring source of the image of their nation as a vast and diverse land …. it is also the primary source of knowledge about or national heroes, martyrs, …. (history).[111] The Shiv Sena used Hindi film songs for political purposes since 1990.[112] From the other end of the spectrum too, Irfan Habib says, "Our

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[101] National Socialist German Workers Party
[102] Hippler, 72
[103] Kazmi, Fareed, 1998, 16
[104] Kellner, UCLA, no date
[105] Adorno and Horkheimer, 2002, 94 - 136
[106] Tripathi, 2023
[107] ibid
[108] Vittal, 2018
[109] Deputy PM 0f India 2002 - 2004
[110] Kazmi, 1994, 14
[111] Advani, 2005, 22, as quoted in Budha 2008, 6-7
[112] Kazmi, 1994, 14

ultimate celebration of nationalism used to be through some of our film songs, particularly those penned by Kavi Pradeep."[113]

Weber discusses how popular films are one of the narrative spaces of visual culture.[114] "Culture is political and politics is cultural. …(and) the cultural stories all of us tell, …. are political."[115] Mirzoeff says that now, visual culture is where historical change takes place, where once it was "seen as a distraction from the serious business of text and history,"[116] and Weber says, "If that is the case, we had better learn how to read visual culture and the transformative processes that occur within it." [117] Raymond Williams said "culture" is "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. [118] Weber says "Culture has to do with how we make sense of the world…. and one of the ways we do this is through stories." [119]

Films were not taken seriously, were considered to be "low culture", and "low politics" as compared to text, to high culture and high politics.[120] Ganti says that most leaders viewed cinema as "low" and "vulgar" entertainment, popular with the uneducated "masses." [121] Perhaps there was a time, initially, when cinema was for the "masses, not the classes", to use a crude subcontinental idiom, but this gap rapidly narrowed , as Budha says "(Films) …. proved their unsurpassed power of communicating both to educated and illiterate masses." [122]

Where Hastings once argued that "For the development of nationhood from one or more ethnicities, by far the most important and widely present factor is that of an extensively used vernacular literature,"[123] Halliday refers to literature as an area of privilege and so to be used very carefully if using literary methods for social analysis.[124] One may extrapolate that particularly in a society where literacy is limited, film may perform this

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[113] Habib, 2017, 6. (Kavi Pradeep had to go underground in 1943, when he wrote *Doorr Hato O Duniya valo*, an anti-British song for the film Kismet. His songs like *Ae mere vatan ke logo* were universally popular).
[114] Weber, 2005, 9
[115] ibid 188.
[116] Mirzoeff, 1999, 30
[117] Weber, 2005, 9
[118] Williams, 1983, 87
[119] Weber, 2005, 3–4.
[120] Weber, 2005, 185-6
[121] Ganti, 2004, 46
[122] Budha, 2008, 7
[123] Hastings, 1997, 3
[124] Halliday, 2003, 195-217

function more democratically. Kazmi says that in India, "… cinema is the cheapest, most accessible and effective medium of mass communication…". [125] Woods considers that film was "ideally placed to foster and cement the national …. consciousnesses" which had been considered the preserve of print capitalism.[126] The poetry of Amrita Pritam, an iconic Punjabi writer, is known and recited in the Punjab, even amongst people with no literacy, but when her short story Pinjar was adapted into a Hindi film, it reached exponentially more people.[127] And now with free Youtube and the growth of streaming services (OTTs), cinema is available inside the home and on every smartphone.

Ravi Vasudevan asserts that "cinema has been the central audio-visual medium of our times."[128] Kumar says that "popular films are both affirmations of our beliefs and demands, which then get mass approval,"[129] and Danish elaborates,

> "The influence of media in instilling ideology in the viewers and maintaining hatred have been major concerns in the wake of certain events of ethnic and religious import between India and Pakistan. In this postmodern age, the lives of the people are directed by the far-reaching influence of the visual images and extended visual narratives. Referencing of history in various texts (political, fictional and visual) has often been used as a propaganda tool to promote the desired biasness among the given audience."[130]

Weber asserts that Hollywood productions help us get a sense of everyday connections between the popular and the political, [131] and "maybe popular films do a lot more political work than we first credited them with doing", they circulate (political) myths, and show us how these function by what must go without saying, in order for a myth to appear to be true.[132]. She challenges the view of film as a "frivolous medium" and quotes Barthes (1972) saying that popular films do a lot of serious political work. [133] Weber discusses de-mythologizing and re-politicizing International Relations myths, but of course film does this for all forms of political myths, as she goes on to say, "the cultural stories that

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[125] Kazmi, 1998, 15
[126] Woods, 22
[127] Bharat, 2008, 62.
[128] Vasudevan, 2004, 71
[129] Kumar, 2008, 129
[130] Danish and Awan, 2017, 127
[131] Weber, 2005, 9
[132] I am paraphrasing Weber, she says "Internal Relations myths"
[133] Weber, 2005, 134

all of us tell, - whether in film… or in everyday life, are political. Knowing how these stories function…gives us the means to critique and create political powerful stories", in short, how to understand them.[134] Bharat writes, "I make films the basis for attempting to understand our present day scenario."[135] A discussion of the representation of Pakistan and Pakistanis in Hindi film is therefore more sophisticated than a search for propaganda influence. It is rather an analysis of what political stories are being told, and what frameworks are used to make sense of those stories.

India-Pakistan

The treatment of Pakistan and Pakistanis in Indian film, obviously draws to some degree on pre-existing frames of understanding. The Two-Nation Theory was used as a rationale for the creation of Pakistan. Enunciated as a concept first by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in 1876,[136] it was affirmed and elaborated by Veer Savarkar,[137] when after eleven years and many mercy petitions, he was released from British prison in the Andaman islands.[138] Adopted by the Muslim League, it was put into practice by the creation of Pakistan. On this basis,

> "The subcontinent was partitioned purely on religious lines even though the people of the two religions were ethnically the same and historically had largely common linguistic, cultural and regional identities. The two communities in undivided India, Hindus and Muslims, had lived together under various regimes for over a thousand years and neither community significantly interfered with the religious and social practices of the other," [139]

nor did they "necessarily see each other solely in terms of strict religious identities." [140] There was also a strong belief contrary to the Two-nation theory, that we were One,

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[134] ibid
[135] Bharat, 2020, 2
[136] Sir Syed Ahmad's in 1888, quoted in Hiro, 2015. 6
[137] known as "Father of Hindutva"
[138] Savarkar, 1943: "I have no quarrel with Mr Jinnah's two-nation theory. We Hindus are a nation by ourselves and it is a historical fact that Hindus and Muslims are two nations" tweeted by Ramachandra Guha , 10.12.2019
[139] Pande 2011, 4
[140] Mohammed, Ashaz, 2024

before Partition. The British imperial powers found it useful to divide and rule by exacerbating this particular difference.

In 1940, after the Pakistan Resolution was passed in Lahore, Maulana Azad said,

> "Eleven hundred years of common history (of Islam and Hinduism) have enriched India with our common achievements. Our languages, our poetry, our literature, our culture, our art, our dress, our manners and customs, the innumerable happenings of our daily life, everything bears the stamp of our joint endeavour…. These thousand years of our joint life (have) moulded us into a common nationality… Whether we like it or not, we have become one Indian nation, united and indivisible." [141]

But Jinnah said,

> "It is a dream [142] that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality, Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs and literary traditions. They neither intermarry nor eat together, and indeed they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions."[143]

One site that both inherently as well as deliberately flouted every tenet of the two-nation theory was Hindi cinema. How pervasive this common culture was, how deep, may be contested, but that one of its most prominent sites was Hindi cinema, there is no doubt. Hindi cinema is both a site and artefact of this common culture and common heritage.

At Independence, the two-nation believers carried the day. Not only did they partition India to create two separate countries, they created separate national identities and two nations that have, since then, been perpetually hostile to each other. The very word nation, understood or misunderstood as it may be, places the discussion in the post-colonial context. And the creation of the nation immediately included the creation of an Other.

Immediately after Partition, before the dust had even settled, India physically laid claim to Kashmir, Junagarh, Hyderabad. Pakistan physically and violently disputed the

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[141] Guha, 2007, 41
[142] (in the sense of being impossible!)
[143] Guha, 2008

Kashmir "settlement", India refused to give Pakistan its agreed share of the joint assets, Gandhiji started a fast in order for Pakistan to be given this share, but the killings continued, and then Gandhiji was killed for allegedly being partisan towards Pakistan/the Muslims. The Kashmir dispute continues to this day, Pakistan and India have fought at least 4 wars, India helped to deliver another partition, this time of Pakistan, resulting in yet another new nation, Bangladesh, striking a body blow to the two-nation theory, or so they thought. Almost 80 years on, Kashmir is an area of despair and violence, Pakistan still holds on to the two-nation theory, completely ignoring the ideological debris after Bangladesh, and one of the keystones of modern India, secularism, is in imminent danger of annihilation.

Initially, after Partition, India's attitude towards Pakistan veered between hoping that Pakistan 'would come to its senses', there would be a reconciliation and that Pakistan would become part of India again, or alternatively that Pakistan simply would be unable to survive and be forced to integrate into India again. Whether from love or from hate, Indians, including state elites, hoped that Pakistan would become part of India again. Not for a moment did Pakistan think this. Most of those who fought for Pakistan, who lived in Pakistan and who went to Pakistan, (and those who went to India too) never dreamt how much hostility would pervade India-Pakistan relations, but neither did they ever envisage a future in which Pakistan would ever become part of India again. This was a major gulf in the political discourses and the sentiments of that time. If Pakistan was a totally imagined community, India was no less so. Both populations, internally divergent ethnically, linguistically, geographically, and religiously had to be straight-jacketed into the modern postcolonial imagined nation-state. Not only had history to be written in the image of these new 'national' communities, but myths and legends and a complete backstory had to be created, by a system of control, that included control of the media, which included cinema.

In a population where "cinema runs like the blood in our veins" [144], there were cinema houses in rural areas, which tended to have a male audience, and open air film showings, which had a more mixed audience.[145] In urban areas, film watching was a regular family ritual, for many families, "first day, first show" (Friday) or the Sunday morning show,

[144] Bhavani Iyer quoted in Bharat, 2024, 2
[145] See *Swades* (2004)

was as regular and important as going to church every week combined with a family picnic, beggars would save money to see the "first day, first show."[146] Hollywood made no dent in replacing Bollywood for family viewing, most Hollywood films would contain content (such as a romantic kiss) which would not have been considered palatable for intergenerational family viewing [147]. Shahrukh Khan, India's greatest superstar, once said in an interview,

> "[Y]ou have to …. make a film that appeals to my 90-year-old grandmother and to the 9-year-old kid. …. I have a couple of films written by American guys, …. then I say: 'OK, here's the song, and here's the mother….. There has to be a mother in the film.'"[148]

Even with the advent of TV and the continuation of radio, films occupy a special place, especially in presenting mega-ideas. Hindi cinema prides itself in being socially relevant, even in its most masala manifestations, the characters also often tend to personify or symbolise the representation of an idea rather than real human characters. Despite often decrying it, all films have a "message", simplistic or basic though it may be. Shahrukh Khan,[149] insists his job is simply to be an entertainer, yet even his most commercial films have visible, if basic and simple, social messages, secularism and a Gandhian philosophy are evident, as is a simple "Indian unity", as well as portraying different "Others" with some respect,[150] and his later films, along with being great entertainers, are scrutinized by thousands for all the relevant subversive social messages.[151]

The changing demographics of the audience also affected the content of films. Multiplexes were established, where one cinema ticket cost about Rs.500, for the average Indian/Pakistani, this would be far beyond their means for a family activity. As multiplexes became more lucrative for film makers, and the experiences of elite (second generation) film-makers more limited, films catering to the tastes of the small elite multiplex audience, often teenagers, started to be made. (A "small elite" in India still means thousands of people, however one has to look at audience numbers in the

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[146] Chakravorty, 1994, 18
[147] Under British rule, Indian films did allow kissing, (Bhatia 2018) as they do now, but Hollywood has also become increasingly "explicit", so the gap remains.
[148] NPR Interviews, Shahrukh Khan, 11.02.2010
[149] India's greatest superstar
[150] *Main hoon na* (2004), *Dil Se* (1998), *Chak de* (2007)
[151] See reviews of *Pathaan* (2023) and *Jawan* (2023)

perspective of film budgets). At a lecture in 2009, Ali Mir [152] opened with a clip from the film *Dostana* (2008), American women in bikinis doing a Bollywood dance on Miami beach, and the film continues in that style, negotiating a path between the undercurrents of Indian context in the diaspora. His contention was that the economies of the multiplex theatre were changing the whole being of Hindi cinema. Where Hindi cinema had been symbolic, melodramatic, perhaps even simplistic, but always socially conscious and aware, committed to a progressive, post-colonial, nation-building project, it was now imitative, vacuous, socially irrelevant, and alien to the bulk of the Indian, (and indeed, subcontinental) population.

For a time, this indeed seemed to be the trend. But it was not long before some of these very same directors and actors were producing socially relevant films. Whether this was the creative urge, a desire for working on important issues, the commitment of filmmakers, or the demand of the audience, Hindi cinema continues to produce relevant and sometimes extremely straight-talking films. In an interview, Anubhav Sinha was asked what made him, as a successful director of super-hit entertainment films, move on to some of the most hard-hitting films of the last five years. He replied that he was now successful and financially stable. He could now make the films that he had always wanted to, about subjects he was passionate about, rather than the films that he needed to in order to earn a living, or to establish himself as a successful filmmaker. He had not expected these films (*Mulk* 2018**,** *Article 15* 2019**)** [153] to make money, but he had simply always wished to make them. It was a pleasant surprise for him that they did reasonably well at the box office, and earned well.[154] Karan Johar talks about how he has grown and evolved, into making less socially irresponsible films.[155] The challenge has always been to present serious and important issues in a popular format, and whether one agrees with their point of view or not, many directors, producers, actors and film teams have done so. Film representations of Pakistan therefore fit within a widespread context of social comment in Indian film-making.

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[152] Ali Mir, film scholar, poet, writer/screen-writer, Professor WPU, N.J, author Anthems of Resistance. Mir's oeuvre engages issues of religious minorities and secularism in South Asia as represented in film.
[153] Mulk is about the destruction of the family of a Muslim terrorist. Article 15 is about casteism leading to the rape of 2 Dalit children, and the connivance and acquiescence of all communities and authorities in a coverup. Both inspired from real incidents.
[154] Farooqui, Anubhav Sinha interview, Jashn-e-Rekhta 2019
[155] Indian Express, 22.07.2023

Identity

While neither the Indian nor the Pakistani states initially sought to exploit film's potential as direct propaganda, nevertheless both national film industries had their own commitments to the national ideology/ies (and/or other ideologies[156]) and did so on their own initiative. Both countries were experiments with the postcolonial idea of the nation state. Pakistan was in two culturally disparate geographical territories separated by a thousand miles of hostile territory. The creation of a Pakistani identity had to be done even more from scratch than an Indian identity. The idea of a country called Pakistan was barely 20 years old, and had only gained popularity in the 5 years or less before the country was founded. This was in contrast to even the name "India", which had an ancient history even if in varying forms and geographies, and which was an existing political entity as part of the British empire. Moreover, the Indian freedom struggle had many decades of activity, before the Pakistani struggle, with many of those who were fighting for the freedom of the new country Pakistan from India, having originally and for many years been part of the Indian freedom movement, the most prominent of these being Jinnah himself.

India's experiment was to carve a single identity from an ancient diversity of ethnicities, languages, and religions, without a single unifying factor other than their old imperial masters and their new nationhood. From the beginning, these two countries were thorns in each other's side. Pakistan, because it was a successful secession which undermined the imagined and much vaunted secular and multicultural Indian nation, and set a dangerous precedent, by the very *raison d'etre* for its creation, positing that different religious cultures implied different nations. It set a dangerous example to all the different cultures within India,[157] and most of all to other disaffected "minorities", particularly religious minorities, for example, the Sikhs. India, was large, popular, and espoused a secular and progressive philosophy, which according to Pakistan, it did not practice, and which was the antithesis of Pakistan's two-nation ideology. India was considered both

[156] *Jaago Hua Savera* (1959) was a left-leaning Pakistani film, which the government made efforts to ban, but never actually did.
[157] Ahmed 2020, Dravidastan, 200-202

hegemonic and inimical to and by Pakistan, in its attitude towards this new state carved out of its Self.

> "The Indian imagination, in particular, seems to have been scarred permanently because, on the face of it, Pakistan seemed to be in a 'win' position having become something where nothing had existed before, but diminished India was left reeling under a niggling sense of loss". [158]

Pakistan's effort has been to demonstrate that because of Islam, it is in fact a separate nation and a separate culture to that of India, and therefore is justified in its separation and its existence. India's effort had been to demonstrate that within the Indian nation, there is a shared and secular common culture which allows room for differences without discrimination, within one nation. Pakistan has clung to religion as a primary marker of differentiation. But the question remained, could it be enough in the face of all the other commonalities?

A crucial component of nation-building is identity building, as important as other forms of state building. This often leads to movements and counter-movements, in different times different narratives are more dominant, and Pakistan has been no exception to this, nor has India. Pakistan tried to accentuate and, in some cases, virtually create, cultural practices that were different to India's, and in others, to make their own version. This is also currently being practiced in India, although initially India's practice was different.

The identity that makes you part of your nation distinguishes and differentiates you at the very same time, from those who are not of your nation. Nationalism has a tendency to create an ideal dummy of "The National", and obviously in reality nothing fits exactly into such a template. People who spill out of this strait-jacketed dummy, are then also "othered". This has happened clearly to non-Muslim Pakistanis, to look at a very clear contradiction, and is now just as clearly happening to Muslim and other non-Hindu Indians, in an era where the current Indian government is also constructing a religious-based, non-secular identity.

Pakistan's military President, Ayub Khan, wrote in 1960, "Till the advent of Pakistan, none of us was in fact a Pakistani, …. Territorially we happened to be Indians, and

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[158] Bharat, 2024, 1

parochially we were a conglomeration of …. smaller provincial loyalties." [159] He did not address the issue that some of "us" had not just been Indians, but had been Indian nationalists, including Jinnah himself. Moreover, these smaller provincial loyalties, Bengal and Punjab had a population on both sides of the border and overlapped the religious divide, you had Bengali Indians, Bengali Pakistanis, Punjabi Indians and Punjabi Pakistanis. Balochistan had a population divided between Iran and Pakistan. The Durand Line dividing the Pashtuns between Afghanistan and Pakistan was not accepted by many Pashtuns. And finally, there were millions of Muslims, who were still Indians. And not just Indians, but increasingly Indians who became suspect, because of the very creation of Pakistan, and who therefore had to demonstrate their Indian nationalism more vociferously than their non-Muslim peers.

So, then what was the difference between a Pakistani and an Indian Muslim? As for non-Muslim Pakistanis, they were simply brushed under the carpet. Hindi cinema remembers them in *Deewar* 2004 and *Tum bin 2* 2016. From 1971, Pakistan was also confronted with the issue of the Bihari refugees, to which it had no answers, and whose existence it simply tried to evade, - but about which the film *Refugee* was made in 2000.

Hindustan ki kasam 1973 "was the first film in Hindi that talked of Pakistan by name, until then, naming Pakistan - *or any country*- as the enemy nation was not allowed by law in India".[160] Even when films did not directly raise the creation of Pakistan, it was almost *de rigueur* to address the issue of secularism in most Indian films, and from the angle that in India, "the Muslim" had his/her place, was entirely accepted, was entirely a part of the Indian political fabric and was entirely loyal to the Indian state. Every film had at least the token Muslim, usually the junior partner or the family friend, or even the younger brother, "sneaked into the plot as a secular prop,"[161] put there solely for this purpose. *Amar, Akbar, Anthony* (1977) a huge blockbuster, was totally based on this theme. Most love stories avoided inter-caste or inter-religious romance, (anathema to all communities, but even more worrying for a minority), but a handful of bold films addressed these issues too (for example, *Bombay* **(**1995) more seriously, *Veer Zara* (2004) more superficially), and while they would have been considered progressive by liberal audiences, and against

[159] Khan, Mohammad Ayub, 1967, 259
[160] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, 203
[161] Sharma, 2009

Hindu-extremism, they would have been very contrary to even moderate Pakistani ideology. From the crassest film to the most sensitive, these messages were routinely disseminated in hundreds of Indian films for decades. And these were the very issues which struck at the heart of the Pakistani narrative, and were essential to the Indian narrative of the time.

So since its inception cinema served as a powerful medium that both articulated and intervened in visions of identity.[162]

Nation, Nation-building, Identity and Film

The "nation" calls upon commonalities of ethnicity, history, language, territoriality, and in its dissentient version, religion. Whereas Gellner and Anderson consider a national identity is shaped by politics, history and war, Smith gives a more primordial explanation of a more ethnic rooted identity. Smith's view is that Gellner has a socio-cultural view which links nationalism to the needs of generating a 'high culture' for modernisation and industrial development.[163] Anderson refers to "nation-ness" itself as a cultural artefact. But also as "the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time", and yet "notoriously difficult to define".[164] Gellner defined "nationalism" in a more prosaic way as "primarily a political principle which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent", [165] but in elaboration, Hylland Eriksen, went on to say that normatively, it was about standardization, homogeneity, community, similarities, even if it was through a centrally created "national identity" as a basis for political legitimacy.[166]

Homi Bhaba sees the nation as an "impossible unity", [167] Seton-Watson sadly observes, that he is "driven to the conclusion" that no "scientific definition" …. can be devised, yet the phenomenon has existed and exists.[168] Nairn caustically puts it as "'Nationalism is the pathology of modern developmental history, as inescapable as 'neurosis' in the individual, with… the same essential ambiguity…., a similar built-in capacity for descent

[162] Woods, back cover
[163] Smith and Smith, 1998, 5
[164] Anderson, 1983, 3-4
[165] Gellner, 1998, 1
[166] Eriksen, 2007
[167] Bhabha, 1990, 3
[168] Seton-Watson, 1977, 5

into dementia….and largely incurable."[169] Laski calls nationalism an anachronism in the contemporary world, an outmoded, deep-seated disease which plagues mankind but which cannot be healed.[170]

But Smith feels that Hobsbawm and Ben Anderson look beyond this paradigm. "Their respective formulations of the 'invented traditions' and the 'imagined community' of the nation have provided the seedbed for more radical 'postmodernist' developments in which the idea of national identity is treated as inherently problematic…." [171] Originally, to paraphrase Nairn with regard to the kind of nationalism that we are looking at, nationalism emerged as a militant movement by native elites to counter imperialism. To motivate their masses, they created powerful myths … based on local artefacts and happenings. [172]. In South Asia, and elsewhere too, this was the initial nationalist othering, the Natives and the Imperialists. India, placing itself in the anti-colonial struggle, saw the colonial rulers as the Other, but Pakistan saw Hindu India as its Other. Cynthia Weber paraphrases Fukuyama as "nationalism is generally an ideology about independence from another group."[173] This is why the word "nationalism" in the Indian subcontinent is often seen in a positive hue.[174]

Because of this history, and the requirement for building a new cohesive nation, Nationalism continues to be viewed positively post-colonially too. But the complications that have attended the creation of a national identity, despite the rhetoric, make it convenient to straitjacket differences and diversity. Once the European imperialists were seen off, many smaller "nations" felt the attitude of the "local" powers over them was equally imperialistic. There is no doubt that there are and have been many forces pulling away from the nation states of India and Pakistan in varying degrees, as there are in many other multicultural and multilingual nation states. Pakistan itself is one such, Bangladesh, Khalistan, Kashmir, Balochistan, Assam, Nagaland….. and each of these seem to define itself also in terms of a contesting nationhood.

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[169] Nairn, 1977, 359.
[170] Habib, 2017, 3
[171] Smith and Smith, 1998, 6.
[172] Nairn, 1977, 339-340
[173] Weber, 2005, 111.
[174] Raghavendra, 2021

Smith discusses how nationalism is a modern ideology, initially an inclusive, liberating and democratic force, which eventually deteriorated into a kind of racism. It became a narrower nationalism, that appealed to difference - linguistic and cultural difference primarily and was led by intellectuals. Eventually this led to ethnic and race-based nationalism. He predicted in the late 1990s that soon it will become evident that this is a transient movement, which is giving way to global forces which transcend the boundaries of nations states.[175] He classified as classical modernism, the acceptance that nations and nationalism are intrinsic to the modern world, which led to the model of 'nation-building',[176] and the "only acceptable model of a fully developed state was a western liberal capitalist" one. [177] Modernism theory even considered that development was "transforming difference into identity." [178] Does not this translate, in reality, into straitjacketing difference to create a single monolithic identity? From the 1980s, there were critiques which questioned the basic assumptions of that paradigm, and with it the model of nation-building; which held on one hand that the nation was an invented, imagined and hybrid category, and on the other hand as a modern version of far older and more basic social and cultural communities.[179]

A nation provides a sense of identity that is based on everyday culture and high culture both, which draws on some justification based in antiquity, in primordial, almost divine or innate commonalities. This takes the modern shape of a geographical nation state. In the modern world, "the cultural distinctiveness of the nation proves its right to exist."[180] Therefore, many nation states lay an emphasis on socially created cultural identities, and an understanding of the nation as a cultural construct, forged and engineered by various elites to cater to certain needs or interests. [181] In this context the legitimacy of a modern state is linked in some respects to the extent of its official 'social' and 'national' identity being accepted by its population. State elites, continuously seek to shape this social identity, to strengthen the legitimacy of whatever state they have – regardless of its antiquity or otherwise.

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[175] Smith and Smith, 1998, 2
[176] ibid
[177] Weber, 2005, 153.
[178] Weber, 2005, 155.
[179] Smith and Smith, 1998, 2
[180] Ayres, 2009, 3
[181] Smith and Smith, 1998, 2–3.

Stressing commonalities, may at times be a weapon instead of an embrace, simply denying difference, or denying another nation its rationale to exist. The nation may simply be a modern construct to serve the interests of a group, which has to distinguish itself from others, so a particular national identity is imagined, and then crafted, and one of the major tools to do this is through a constructed "culture". This culture unites the nation, it differentiates it from others, providing the baggage for an identity of the self. Brass says people who are distinguishable by cultural markers of identity, emphasize their distinctiveness, and then act as a group to pursue a political aim.[182] I would posit that in pursuit of such a political aim, a group doesn't simply strengthen but sometimes creates markers of distinctiveness. The very phrase "cultural distinctiveness" , that *raison d'etre* of nationhood, contains innately, within the concept of the "distinctiveness" – the "Other" culture that they are distinct from.[183] Constructed and reproduced by discourse, the group becomes a moral and meaningful "imagined community" that defines itself, and by inference, what it is not: the Other, and "the question of where and how borders towards the Other should be drawn therefore become crucial." [184]

Processes of identity formation – in terms of states having national identities and or being the bearer of identity, have been explored in terms of how national identities affect interstate relations,[185] and in this regard a negative othering seems to have become a characteristic for national identification.[186] Neumann argues that this identity is not located in "essential and readily identifiable cultural traits but in *relations* (italics mine) (articulated between Self and Other)", while Resende argues that this othering is expressed in "foreign policy discourses, images, and popular culture."[187] This can be seen in India and Pakistan's construction of their identity, of their Self, in an environment of material poverty and insecurity, is "constituted based on relations of difference toward the Other", which involves a "construction of difference". The Other

> "becomes the signifier for threat, chaos, instability and negativity in order to allow the articulation of the Self as the signifier for security, order, stability and positivity. As a result, in order to maintain and preserve a so-called cohesive

[182] Paul Brass, 1976
[183] Ayres, 2009, 3.
[184] Neumann 1996, 1
[185] Holland 2013, Neumann 1999, Resende 2020
[186] Diez 2005; Neumann 1996, Resende 2020
[187] Resende, 2020, 2

> national identity in a situation confronted with other difficulties, there is a motivation to search for potential enemies." [188]

Cinema is a useful medium through which to explore this sense of Othering of Pakistan, and it also allows an analysis of its possible ambiguous nature, not necessarily always negative.

Nation Building with Reference to Hindi Film

What story was India cinema to tell? The horrors of Partition, which could only fuel a dangerous hatred that could further rend the country apart, or a celebration of the birth of a free new India, building a new society, a positive, constructive, and inclusive way forward.

> "The immediate national imperative was the painstaking erection of the edifice of new nations, cinema inevitably came to be commandeered for this purpose. ….. Indian cinema, in its earliest stages, mouthed the lofty ideals of nation- building in patriotic and venerating references to political modern India …."[189]

"…. the industry sees itself, firmly embedded in the ideology of the nation state." [190]

Thus Hindi cinema, after Partition, was committed to the nation-building project, and on the whole to a Nehruvian secular vision of it, within a totally post-colonial paradigm. The famous film *Gadar* (2001) is "Dedicated to (those who) …. contributed to the noble task of nation building." There was virtually no serious questioning of the standard vision of nationalism, even if secularism acquired a particularly Indian colour. [191] Nehru said in 1955, that cinema "is of the highest importance (therefore) a government must be intimately concerned with it."[192] But despite lip service and some token funding, and despite India being home to some of the world's greatest film makers, films were not taken seriously. From a positive point of view, one could say, as Nehru did, that he had a horror of government control and propogandist use of film.[193] So, the government did not

[188] Based on discussion in Resende 2020, 5
[189] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, ix
[190] Budha, 2008, 5
[191] Bharti, 2017
[192] Nehru in Ray, 2009, 28
[193] Nehru in Ray, 2009, 26

try to influence films, but nor did they give them the much wanted concessions and tax holidays that the industry wanted, however, they allowed them to progress independently, without support, but also without pressure or coercion. In later years Indira Gandhi, who had been President of the Film Society movement in her youth, was personally instrumental in having the ban removed from the iconic film *Garam Hawa* (1974), which addressed the plight of the Muslims of India.[194]

Despite their disappointment with this attitude of the government, the Indian film industry was itself committed to the nation building project in the traditional post-colonial sense, many influential filmmakers such as Guru Dutt, Balraj Sahni, Chetan Anand, Shama Zaidi, MS Sathyu, Bhisham Sahni, Kaifi Azmi, and many others, either belonged to or sympathised with the left-leaning Indian Peoples Theatre Association, or the Progressive Writers Association, and Nehruvian ideals.

> "[F]ilms produced under the influence of the Indian Peoples' Theatre Association (IPTA) reflect some of the aims, aspirations and features of Third Cinema. The association, which was informally associated with the Communist Party of India, …. with a manifesto calling for a 'defence of culture against Imperialism and Fascism'….. The IPTA grew as a cultural avant-garde through the 1940s and 1950s, exercising a significant impact on pre-independence Indian cinema in the production of realist films such as *Dharti ke Lal* [195]….. IPTA influence extended beyond independence….."[196],

an interesting mix of Gandhian and Marxist ideologies.[197]

IPTA's influence continued into the early 50s, in both theatre and film, it had prominent Muslim members, Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, Mehboob Khan, Aghajani Kashmiri.[198] Before Independence, Bijon Bhattacharya's play *Nabanna*[199] in (1944), about the Bengal Famine, toured much of India, and was followed by K.A Abbas's film *Dharti ke Lal* and Chetan Anand's *Neecha Nagar*[200], both in 1946. Almost all such films spoke of national

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[194] Mukherjee and Mandal, Filmkopath, 2022
[195] Rubies of the Soil
[196] Woods, 145
[197] Chakravorty, 1994, 92
[198] Raghavendra, 2016, xx, 9
[199] Harvest Festival
[200] Lowly City

unity, and banished communal concerns by the power of unity. They addressed some of the most important social concerns of that time, independence from the British empire, although covertly, the need for social reform viz a viz class, caste and gender, and espoused a perhaps romantically socialist doctrine.

> "Many in the industry harboured a genuine desire to become part of the grand adventure of transforming India into a modern and sovereign democracy. [perhaps] the strained state-industry relations contributed to self-censorship on the part of the industry – including its silence on Partition."[201]

After partition, films like *Awara*[202] (1951), *Shree 420* [203](1955), *Mother India* (1957), *Pyaasa*[204] (1957), and *Kaghaz ke phool*[205] (1959), are all very much part of the IPTA influence. Whether with veiled metaphor or more overtly, the films reflected social reform, social concerns, and were committed to nation building, largely within a secular and national unity ideology,[206] (sometimes referred to as the "golden era" of Indian cinema)[207] even if not overtly referring to Pakistan.

Many films were based on a Hindu-Muslim friendship/kinship , *Aap ke Deewane* [208](1978), *Amar Akbar Antony* (1980), *Ram Rahim* (1983),[209] *Yaadon ki baraat*[210] (1958); the mandatory Muslim may often have been tokenistic, nevertheless Indian Hindi cinema was peopled by many shades of broadly progressive opinion. It had a substantial population of Muslims, Christians and Hindus, and was perhaps one of the most secular playing fields in India. Even without support or funding, commercial films both reflected and attempted to shape national identity. Indian film makers considered themselves committed to secularism and progressive - and even socialist and also Gandhian - political ideals. There were large numbers of Muslims in the film industry, and in IPTA, who made the choice to stay in India, they were by their very nature secular, and opposed to the creation of Pakistan. There were Hindu film people committed to these national

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[201] Sarkar, 2009, 64
[202] The Vagabond
[203] Mr. 420
[204] The Thirsty
[205] Paper Flowers
[206] Saran, 2013, Introduction (no page)
[207] ibid
[208] Crazy for you
[209] For a more elaborate list and discussion, see Jain, 2011
[210] Procession of memories

ideals, some of whom were refugees from Pakistan, all of them had a particular interest and angle on Partition, which naturally veered towards the secular and nationalistic.

But funding was a major concern and in the vacuum left by the lack of any government support, finances came from underworld sources and there was a time when the Mumbai underworld, another secular playing field, had its tentacles all over the Hindi film industry. The film industry provided an easy way to launder black money, and this power brought in not just the influence, but also the aesthetics of rich and powerful criminals, and even values and violence. It was after the 2000s, when Indian cinema was finally recognized as an "industry" and therefore became eligible for bank loans, that it was able to become independent of such financiers.

Hindi cinema became a popular cultural lens through which the new nation of India was imagined. Gera cites how readings of popular Hindi films by scholars such as Ashish Rajadhyaksha, Madhava Prasad, Ravi Vasudevan and Gayatri Chatterjee have called attention to the nationalistic ideology of Indian cinema and to its commitment to the nationalistic drive towards modernity and highlighted the role they played in the formation of the Indian citizen subject.[211]

The research literature on Indian films and the Pakistan-India context is quite limited, but is suddenly burgeoning. In Filming the Line of Control, Bharat cites the role of the auteur as a historian,[212] and Budha discusses the Reflectionist model which examines a national film industry in relation to national politics."[213] They assert that "There is a unique confluence between history and film studies." [214] and with particular reference to India and Pakistan, and that "The theme of patriotism in our films has been a veritable barometer of the political climate of the two countries."[215] However the findings of this analysis do not support such a direct link between the political mood of a period and its film. The interactions are more long term, with different motifs present in the same period. Films take time to make, India-Pak politics is volatile, and "(individual) films can also move away from political rhetoric to iterate the need to maintain links of love

[211] Roy 2012, 15
[212] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, xi
[213] Budha 2008, 4
[214] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, xii
[215] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, xi

and common heritage"[216] not only resisting the prevailing tide in a given period, but becoming the biggest blockbusters. Adam O Brien also asserts the importance of "cinema's capacity for wonder and hope."[217] Brereton says, "while at first sight, fictional cinema seems a poor substitute for effective and direct engagement with (the issues), nevertheless, its global reach in itself means Hollywood has an important role to play in promoting awareness around (these) issues"….[218] While Brereton is talking about Hollywood, the global reach of Bollywood is more than twice that of Hollywood, and geographically more intense/concentrated. Brereton continues later,

> "…we cannot expect dramatic changes in worldviews, much less calling attention to ethical predispositions as a result of simply watching a movie. Naturally also, viewers tend to be attracted by the kind of films that fit their belief systems; and possibly as a worst case scenario, (eco-)films may end up only preaching to the converted. ….. The late, great film critic Robert Ebert of the Chicago Sun-Times often talked of the power of cinema to invoke empathy and allow audiences to step into another world and see reality from a different perspective".[219]

We need to move beyond looking for simplistic propaganda impacts – even progressive ones – and rather see cinema as a reflection of different views. This are certainly shaped by powerful ideologies but not in a linear way.

"Hollywood cinema in general remains good at portraying effects, but finds it difficult to show causes, which might in turn address underpinning ecological and environmental problems."[220] In Hindi cinema too, any analysis of causes tends to be simplistic, in the older IPTA socialist films, and equally in modern films. However they kept an awareness of realities and incongruous though it may seem, they kept the issues of the common Indian on the public radar. However, there are exceptions to this rule of dealing simplistically with issues and causes, *Raazi* (2018) raises complicated issues, far more complicated than the book on which it is based, so do *Article 15* (2019), *Mulk*[221] (2018),

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[216] ibid
[217] Brereton 2016, 1
[218] ibid
[219] Brereton 2016, 33
[220] Brereton 2016, 188
[221] Country

Dharmputra[222] (1961)**,** *Swades*[223] (2004)**,** *Kya Dilli kya Lahore*[224] (2014)**,** *Teri baaton main aise uljha rha*[225] (2024). The problems presented in the films may have a simple resolution, but the wider issue is presented as more complex than the simple storyline.

> "Cinema, therefore, has played an important role in state discourses about development, nationhood, and modernity in post-independence India. Although …. the state had invested in television specifically for pedagogical and modernization purposes, cinema has existed and flourished in India as a mass medium for …. over a century – and is woven into the fabric of urban life….. unlike television, is not state-controlled."[226]

However, the point needs to be stressed that it is subject to the Censor, the mob and the politicians.

"Patriotic" films like *Upkar* [227](1967), were also self-critical. In recent times, one of the most powerful and potent chants of the subcontinent, "Azadi" was used in the (anti-) Citizenship demonstrations all over India, including JNU, in the superhit film *Gully Boy* **(**2019), and pejoratively in *Kashmir Files* (2022. "*Ghundagardi nahin challe gi*" is another subcontinent-wide slogan, (No room for thug-rule now), and is part of the music of *Phir bhi dil hai Hindustani*[228] *(*2000), a comedy with a twist, which also shows a whole song "picturised" on communal rioting. (*Tu hee dekh ma, ye barbadiyan, sub jalte ghar, sub jalte nagar, haen tere. ... gumrah haen kyun tere bete?) "*Look, Mother (Mother India), this destruction, all these burning homes, these burning hamlets, are yours. Look Mother, … why are they misguided, these sons of yours?")

In Shooting Terror, Bharat quotes Terry Eagleton, "culture has become part of the problem rather than the solution." [229] And film, as part of culture, while it can be part of the solution, is without doubt, part of the problem, between India and Pakistan. It is these aspects that this thesis examines.

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[222] Son of the Faith
[223] We, the People
[224] What Delhi, what Lahore?
[225] So entangled in your words
[226] Ganti, 2013, 47.
[227] Favour
[228] The heart is still Indian
[229] Bharat, 2020, 2

Bharat raises the hope of cinema transcending even the film maker's prejudices [230] but I would like to balance that with the givens and limitations of commercial cinema. Firstly, these are commercial films, they require a huge financial investment, they are made for profit, therefore they cannot flaunt an unpopular message. To make a film commercial, the first step is that it needs to pass the censor board, so it cannot sell any point of view the censor board will not pass. And crucially, commercial film superstars and filmmakers, no matter how democratic or progressive or secular, are not revolutionaries. It is within these limitations we look at the films. There are often unrealistic expectations of what commercial films can accomplish. [231] However within these limits cinema provides an underexplored source through which to explore popular representations of Pakistan and Pakistanis.

Themes and Tropes for exploration

Many Hindi films mention Pakistan, some have it as the main focus, and many others as a passing reference. What exactly is the portrayal and perception of Pakistan in Hindi films?

Brereton holds that

> "A tremendous amount of moral thinking and the development of ethical feeling and perception is undertaken when reading literature or watching films. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that for most people the mass media is the primary way in which they acquire ethical attitudes, specially within contemporary culture".[232]

In situations of such polarity, Bharat feels that it is "impossible—for both the filmmaker and the viewer to avoid taking sides …. giving rise to what Noam Chomsky has termed a 'distorted morality,'[233] and so Pak-themed films confront the exasperating issue of ethicalness even more than necessary.[234]

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[230] Bharat, 2020, 4
[231] Dhar, 2023
[232] Brereton, 2016, 2
[233] Chomsky, 2002
[234] Bharat, 2020, 5-6

There are secular, inclusive films that date even from the silent 30s, *Ram Rahim* (1930), Pankhaj Jain suggests that "V. Shantaram's *Padosi* [235](1941) may be the first Hindi film where Hindu–Muslim unity is the main emphasis of the story.[236] There were a number of such films, with stories of a mother having two sons, fraternal discord, lost brothers (*Anmol Ghari* [237](1946), *Mother India* **(**1957), *Waqt* [238]**(**1965), *Do Raaste* [239](1969)**,** *Johny Mera Naam* [240](1970), *Karan Arjun (1995),* or one woman having two lovers (*Anmol Ghari* **-**1946), *Mahal* [241]**(**1949). Dev Anand's *Hum Ek Haen (We are One)* **(**1946) was another important film. This is not just a device used for Pakistan, it is very much in the allegorical aesthetic of Indian cinema and its mythological and folk theatre roots. The trouble of course with an allegory is that it cannot be commanded to stay true to its roots, but can fly off into different fantasies, and free itself, and so it is difficult to draw conclusions from such films. But in many of these films, there is a prodigal family member, generally a son or a brother, who always in the end returns to the family fold.

But there is a definite progression even here because initially

> "…..the messages in popular cinema come from the epics/Puranas, the utterances of wise men and texts like the *Manusmriti* [242], all pointing to 'ancient wisdom' while patriotism is a sentiment that cannot go back to before the nation (*or at least the idea of it*)[243] came into existence" [244].

However, the Hindutva version of "nation" does exactly that, as India seeks to discovers ancient roots for an exclusive "Indian" nation, and numerous films follow this lead, from mythological films to historical ones.

> "Commercial Hindi cinema has long played the role of popular historian and narrator for the country constructing images that affirm, challenge and subvert hegemonistic discourses offered by the state, the majority community and the socio economic and political elite. In negotiating this space, Hindi cinema has

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[235] Neighbour
[236] Jain, 2011
[237] Priceless Moment/Priceless Watch
[238] Time
[239] Two Roads
[240] Johny is my name
[241] Palace
[242] The Laws of Manu
[243] Italics mine
[244] Raghavendra, 2021, 157

> attempted to represent and decipher historical changes for the masses, as well as anticipate them. This role has required popular cinema to address issues of internal dissent as well as external threats, especially the historically traumatic and contentious relationship with Pakistan. Over the past 60 years Hindi cinema has careened between extremes of xenophobic and aggressive nationalism, specially in times of war with that neighbour, and a paternalistic pacifism that appears to deny that neighbour state its validity as a separate nation." [245]

For the Pakistanis who think that Indian cinema is obsessed with Pakistan,[246] to consider an annual average of five, or even ten films out of 300 as an "obsession" is itself a sort of reverse obsession, if not a paranoia. Fatima Bhutto says that

> "Pakistani film-makers are making movies about trans love stories, female desire and the toxic societal power of patriarchal fundamentalists, and producing music that questions the divisions and partitions between us and our Indian brothers and sisters. And so it is doubly strange to watch what is happening across the border, where culture is no longer a medium used to extend conversation but rather a means to snuff it out.

This analysis seems oblivious to the fact that Hindi films are not only making films – not just songs - about all of the above, but they are there not to extend the conversation on India-Pakistan with Pakistanis, but primarily to extend this conversation within Indians.

Rushton says that one should ask, what it is that films do?[247]

> "How do films feature as part of the way we think about the world. In what ways do the impressions and thoughts we collect from films, add to our experiences of reality? In short, in what ways do films become a parts of our lives, parts of our world, parts of our reality?" [248]

As Leab writes, single movies may be quite ineffective, but repetition has its effect.[249]

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[245] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, 126.
[246] Bhutto, 2023
[247] Rushton, 2011, 4
[248] Rushton, 2011, 4
[249] Leab, 1994, 49

Before we try and judge what they do and how they influence our experience and reality, we must try and see what they say, even if this can be understood in different ways, even by the film-makers themselves. Where Anil Sharma cites the example of *The Hero* (2003) who did not allow a Pakistani flag to fall to the ground, as showing his respect for the Pakistan flag, he is also proclaiming paternalistic Indian magnanimity. Simplistically, if we tried to divide the films into having positive, negative and indifferent portrayals of Pakistan, we would find that a single film would have a number of different portrayals, some films, and some portrayals are more complex, and do not allow a simplistic definition, these are the ones that are interesting and hopeful. And it here that the defining of introspective, hostile, ambiguous and reconciliatory tropes allows a more multilayered analysis.

The Political Origins of Othering

Having discussed above, the Nation, Nation building, and Identity, to complete the theoretical framework for the thesis, I move logically from Identity to Othering, and how this Othering is presented in the portrayal of Pakistani in Hindi cinema.

Othering in the post-colonial sense can be traced most directly to Edward Said's *Orientalism*, and one may say, the making of Orientalism and subalternity go together,[250] as mirror and image. In western philosophy,[251] Othering has an older lineage, where it has its roots in psychoanalysis, and in the Lacanian discussion of the Big Other and the Small Other.[252] So in the colonial situation the Big Other becomes the colonizer and that was the divide that Fanon talks about writing Black skin, White masks.[253] Another aspect of Lacanian Othering is "Lacan's formulation (is) the "desire of the Other." [254]

But in the political case, as further theorized by Gayatari Spivak, Othering is a practice within the colonial and the post-colonial context, which involves a whole discourse and a narrative, as well as legal practices, in which the colonized were assigned negative attributes or qualities or certain collectively reduced identities, to affirm the differences between the colonizer and the native, so that the native could be seen in a particular way,

[250] Pandey, Gyanendra, 1994, 198
[251] Raja, 2019
[252] Mambrol, 2017
[253] Fanon, 1952
[254] Lacan, 2004, 235

and hence subjugated and controlled, and this entire process of Othering was deeply connected to stabilizing the Europeans sense of themselves. [255]

Resende too believes that we are in some degree dependent on the Other inasmuch our sense of Self emerges from encountering the Other: we are constituted in and by our relationship to it,[256] in that sense the Self is always hostage to the Other. [257] "One's 'Self' is defined and strengthened as it is compared to the 'Other' who is considered an outsider or different. The 'Other' is whatever the 'Self' is not." [258] Or the "Self cannot exist, cannot have a concept of itself as Self, without the Other." [259] This is expressed in folk thought, in everyday discussion, in literature, in academic contexts, and in spiritual terms. There is a Tanzanian saying, "To be brothers, there must be Others."[260] Beauvoir writes; "Otherness is a fundamental category of human thought. Thus it is that no group ever sets itself up as the One without at once setting up the Other over against itself." [261] The word *Umbutu* might express this indivisibility, an ancient African spiritual idea that has many translations,[262] it is translated as "You are my other me", and paraphrased as "Without you, I don't really exist".[263] Spivak, discussing the Other as being "my shadow,"[264] expresses a similar concept.

Othering and belonging have been referred to as the "problem of the 21st century".[265] Othering can be constructed with various degrees of ease and difficulty. When communities are of different races, different "colours", Othering can be visually represented in film. In the context of India, the initial Othering was a simple matter, (relatively), when it was between the foreign rulers and the natives, between the British and the "Indians". Othering, in the colonial context, was simpler, by and large, a matter of black and white, metaphorically and literally.[266] This is the context of Edward Said's Orientalist Othering. An assumption on the part of the powerful, of an absolute and a

[255] Raja, 2019
[256] Resende, 2020, 13
[257] Resende, 2020, 15
[258] Wallenius and Bhat, 2017
[259] Kearney as quoted by Onbelet, 2015
[260] Tanzanian saying
[261] Beauvoir, Vintage 2010, 6
[262] O'Connell, 2023
[263] Butler, 2015
[264] Spivak, 1988
[265] Powell, 2015
[266] Obviously Otherness is more complex than black and white. Tchen, 2017

priori binary divide. And "nationalism" in the colonial and the post-colonial context was the mirror image of this Othering.

But a different issue arises when the difference is not so visible. This is the context, extrapolating backwards, how do we create Othering out of a context of Sameness? One way is to Divide and Rule, the Divide creates the Othering. Any sameness, any unity, had to confront and combat this. Till 1906 and the creation of the All India Muslim League, despite Sir Syed and despite Savarkar, there was no *official* Othering from within the Indians, although the British powers had definitely created these categories that sought to make watertight the identities for Selves and Others. There was no Absolute Othering here, the Othering had to be argued, had to be substantiated – or otherwise – had to be proved to be Absolute, and this not only was the case until the 14th of August when Partition came into force, but this undercurrent of sameness pervades this relationship even now, despite the borders, the nationalism, despite the languages, the racism, despite the visible markers of dress or ornament that are used to create Othering.[267] I will argue that this is visible in Indian cinema's portrayal of Pakistan even while it may Other or villainize Pakistan.

Post-colonially, "Nationalism had to negotiate the difficult terrain of the Other-amongst-Us even as it proclaimed the guilt of the Other from foreign lands." [268] This was the situation in the Indian subcontinent, where between Indians and Pakistanis, there are not inherent or obvious visible physical differences.[269]

What were the origins of this Othering within? This remains an ongoing complicated and controversial question. Nevertheless, it is a fact that it was a British decision to use religion as a marker of division in India, as in Ireland. Pande states that since the establishment of "the British Indian Empire in 1858, the Muslim elite did not just lose political and economic power, but, more importantly they "developed a feeling of powerlessness". Perhaps being a religious minority had previously never been an issue for them, Pande says Muslim leaders had never "felt like a minority".[270] Before the

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[267] Chang talks about visible markers in Who we be 2014
[268] Pandey, Gyanendra, 1994, 199
[269] In Ireland, Irish from Northern Ireland and the Republic look similar, as do many Europeans, in the sub-continent it may be easier to tell the region to which a person may belong than their religion. Punjabis, Sindhis, Bengalis look the same no matter which side of the border they may be, if Pushtoons or Punjabis look different, these are regional differences.
[270] Pande, 2011, 4

British, the Mughal monarchy, and every other rule preceding it, was not governed by such numbers, perhaps not even by the contexts or religious sameness or othering. But once the idea of a separate homeland had been floated, in an unusual twist, an articulate section of this community, set themselves up, and were accepted by the ruling British, as the representatives of the community, and *desired* to be Othered. The crucial question remains to this day whether this was as much or more, than the "majority" community wished to "Other" them. We may broadly identify different strands within the majority community of that time, those who did not allow their discourse, which naturally reflected the symbolic and rhetorical imagery of the majority, to be affected by the concerns of a minority. Then there were those who grudgingly realized that concessions needed to be made to this large minority community to prevent their disenchantment with the freedom movement. Yet others exploited divisions within the minority community to prevent them becoming a substantial voice, more shades of divide and rule. The last strand were those who accepted the seriousness of minority concerns and did not wish for a partition, and who consequently integrated the political struggle, the most prominent initiative is the Khilafat movement, which had its own contradictions. But the political landscape of the time was naturally dominated by the majority, much of the rhetorical and symbolic imagery of the times being in their cultural idiom, this gave an opportunity, an excuse, or a reason - to sections of the Muslim minority to "opt out", into - Pakistan.

This idea of Pakistan exploded the Self of the Indian Identity that was Othering the colonizers. It created an Other of itself from within the Indians, it sought to Other every Muslim from the Indian identity. The Pakistani justification for this would be that at least since British rule, there were already two identities within India. Whether this pre-existed the British, whether this was created by the British, the Hindus, or the Muslims, it was a fact of life under the British. Muslims were a quarter of the population (1941 Census) [271] and the Muslim elite were extremely nervous of the numbers game of democracy which they felt would never allow them equality, and permanently reduce them to a discriminated minority. The Indian spokespeople of the time were the elite, whether they were Hindus or Muslims. Perhaps these concerns were initially not taken seriously enough by the freedom movement; additionally, sections of a privileged Muslim elite, (but not only) became attached to the idea of Pakistan.

[271] Graff and Galonnier, 2013, Introduction, Census of India 1941

When Partition made Pakistan and India both physical realities, each nation had to imagine an identity for itself, for even India had never been one nation in the modern sense. [272] And Pakistan had only existed in the imagination so far. If Pakistan defined itself as a land for the Muslims of India, what differentiated Pakistanis from the Muslims who remained in India? Practically this "opened the flood gates" to any Indian Muslim who wished to come to Pakistan. While this was publicly the policy of the Pakistan government initially, in reality this was unsustainable, and rapidly there came a time when this was no longer possible. India was already a country with a hugely diverse population, and now because of the creation of Pakistan, it became even more crucial for India to create a unifying identity that encouraged their majority Hindu population to embrace their Muslim (and other minority) populations. But the very existence of Pakistan was a living thorn in this ideology, and from the very beginning, there was hostility between the two countries. Creating this identity, this Self, in the case of both the countries was a crucial need, and in both cases, the very existence of the Other, and the ideology of this other, struck at the very roots of their own ideology. If Secularism was good and right and possible as an ideology, Pakistan didn't have a justification to exist, and if the two-nation theory was right, then India did not have the justification to exist as a multicultural and diverse entity. For each, the existence of the Other struck at the very notion of its own Self.

New nation-states of the post-colonial period all engaged in nation-building (whatever they defined this as) and neither India nor Pakistan were any exception to this. One of the initial aspects of nation building has been to create a national identity, a national Self, and for that the existence of an Other is a very useful short cut as has been noted above. Othering is constructed both officially and unofficially, by the state and in opposition to the state, and sometimes by the Other itself. Official and unofficial ways of Othering often overlap and reinforce and affect each other. In India and Pakistan, Athique says that that "One of the key defining elements of nation-building has been the reflexive production of "Otherness" between the two nations." [273]

Some of the most powerful tools of Othering are education, literature, the media; and of media, in the subcontinent, film is arguably the most powerful, a modern creator and

[272] Habib 2017, 3
[273] Athique, 2008, 22

interpreter of folklore, of legend and of popular memory in the sub-continent. Although the Indian film industry had its own grievances against the Indian state, it was itself committed entirely to the nation building project, in a completely post-colonial image. The left-wing IPTA[274], so influential in Hindi cinema, was entirely, and perhaps somewhat romantically, committed to Nehru's secular socialist vision.

Chaturvedi says, "…. the images of the 'Other' do not remain confined to a political elite, they are transmitted to the masses through education and media." [275] He extends this to say how "The discourse of otherness meets practice not only in the Pakistani social studies curriculum but also at the least expected site of the Wagah border crossing between Pakistan and India".[276] He then cites how this site is theatrically used,[277] in a way that speaks volumes of this very ambiguity, and discusses how the ceremony at the Wagah border, which is meant to display mutual aggression, in fact "displays the common heritage of both nations precisely in the manner in which it seeks to proclaim their difference." [278] Athique too, talks about a scene in the film *Border* (1997), which "juxtaposes two sets of soldiers whose similarity is more apparent than their difference." He goes to say that despite the "somewhat artificial and contingent nature of Pakistan's otherness…. it can also be argued that this does not ultimately destabilize the production of a national other."[279] And taking these very two examples which inherently contain sameness, of the film *Border* (1997), and the actual border at Wagah, he reiterates that at the very same time they also "provide a performative account of difference which facilitates the narration of the border as something that is both tangible and sacred." [280] In 1997, Kalra and Purewal write that the guardians and enforcers of the border at Wagah, "however, have more in common than sets them apart: men who look alike, speak the same language, often eat the same sort of food". [281] Wagah is one of the most visible symbols of the Otherness, and yet as the above discussion shows, this Othering is created out of an underlying Sameness.

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[274] Indian People's Theatre Association
[275] Chaturvedi, 2001, 153
[276] Chaturvedi, 2001, 149
[277] Chaturvedi, 2001, 156-157
[278] Chaturvedi, 2001, 156-159
[279] Athique, 2008, 25
[280] ibid
[281] Kalra and Purewal, 1999, 58

As Viswanath and Malik beautifully elaborate the underlying logic of this Othering out of Sameness ;

> "what is often forgotten, with a will to never remember, is that the other was once the self, and the self will always be partly the other. It is left to folklore, legend and popular memory to hold on to and recall the lost self, to remember what official history chooses to forget with vengeance."[282]

Even in the process of Othering Pakistan in films, the very fact that these films are made about Pakistan and India, the preoccupation with Pakistan, the use of mutually intelligible language, the acting of a Pakistani by an Indian, and even vice versa, [283] at the same time displays the commonalities of expression, concerns and resolutions in the culture of these two countries, while trying to highlight the differences, thus culminating in the Pakistani audience even for these particular films.

This discussion will continue in greater detail in the next chapter, where I establish how the creation of a national identity is often done in juxtaposition to the existence and sometimes the creation of an Other, and also by creating unification stories and myths.

In Indian cinema, by virtue of the very fact of the presentation of Pakistan, an Other is established. This may be done in order to create an Othering, or it may be done in order to dispel this othering, but the very existence of Pakistan establishes the existence of this Other, and this is necessary in order to address any issue pertaining to this Other. India-Pakistan issues cannot be addressed without recognizing the existence of Pakistan, whether the narrative laments this existence, whether it considers this existence a tragedy and or a blight on the body of India, or whether it simply accepts or perhaps justifies this existence.

It is the different ways that this Othering is portrayed that I attempt to parse in this thesis. Given the diversity of India, given that Pakistanis were once Indians, given ethnic, geographic, linguistic, religious and multiple other samenesses, Othering is created simply by presenting a Pakistani. But numerous films, intentionally and unintentionally express the commonality and the samenesses, simultaneously with expressing this

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[282] Viswanath and Malik, 2009, 65
[283] *Kapoor and Sons* (2016), *Road to Sangam* (2009), *Raees* (2017), *Chashme bad door* (2013), *Hindi Medium* (2017), *Mom* (2017)

Othering: *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973), *Garam Hawa* (1974), *Henna* (1991), *Mammo* (1994), *Hindustan ki kasam* (1999), *Jhoom Barabar Jhoom* (2007), *Jhootha hi sahi* (2010), *Ek tha Tiger* (2012), *PK* (2014), *Bajrangi Bhaijan* (2015), the list is too long.

While building an Indian national identity out of myriad ethnicities, religions, castes, classes, nationalities led to the complex identity that embraced Indian secularism, the simple existence of the religiously-based state of Pakistan, carved out of an India in which it believed that Muslims would suffer discrimination, gave lie to this core ideology. After all, every single Indian Muslim could have been, and is sometimes still viewed as a potential or closet – Pakistani. How to draw clearer boundaries between such overlaps was a tangled task, and this is one complication of expressing the Otherness of Pakistan and Pakistanis. There is a simple factual othering, expressed through citizenship and documentation. But we have seen in recent use of the CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act 2019) and the National Register of Citizenship in India, that even such "simple facts" can have complicated ramifications. Even accepting the simple facts as a given, is this fact, or this document the only difference between Indians and Pakistanis? So are Pakistanis and Indians just the same , are all Indian Muslims the same as Pakistanis except for this "piece of paper", or an accident of geography, or are there choices involved or more intrinsic differences? Can all Pakistanis be evil? Are all Pakistanis "different"? Are all Pakistanis "the enemy", after all Pakistan is "*dushman mulk"* (the enemy country). If not, are "we" all the same? And if so, then how and why is Pakistan the Other?

The Portrayal of this Othering

I define four main patterns of portrayal, the major trope areas, which I have referred to as themes. Each theme is expressed through detailed tropes, the theme is in fact a collection of these tropes.

1. The Introspective theme or collection of introspective tropes are those where Pakistan is portrayed as an accepted entity and a catalyst for looking introspectively within Indian society, these may be somewhat – but not always - congruent with a neutral portrayal. I study this as the Introspective trope, appearing in various genres, where the Self that is most evident.

2. The Hostile tropes are generally those where Pakistan is portrayed as the Enemy Other, again with an elaborated caveat that even these "simple" Hostile tropes are more complex and militate against being reduced to a straightforward and simple hostility.

3. Between the hostile tropes and the reconciliatory tropes which I discuss last, there is a plethora of tropes which are, intentionally or unintentionally, not easy to define as either hostile or friendly. They are ambiguous, and are open to subjective and polarized interpretations, I have elaborated and clarified such portrayals in Chapter 5, and designated these as Ambiguous tropes.

4. Finally, Pakistan may be Embraced, through a variety of Reconciliatory tropes, being the most complex, requiring detailed treatment, so these are divided in two groups, each in a different chapter, one discussing a number of tropes which offer reconciliation, the other dealing with one single reconciliatory trope, Peace.

These areas reflect the Self, the Other, and the Embrace, and of course overlap and intertwine. Through exploration and examination of the empirical data, they were identified, elaborated and fine-tuned into detailed tropes.

Each of these four categories, themes, collections of tropes comes with its caveats, thus this analysis is done not using categories such as "hostile films" or "reconciliatory films", or films with "hostile" or "friendly" themes, because typically "hostile films" may carry all of the above 4 tropes, and thus are complicated to define within a single such theme, therefore I have considered themes are those categories which are collections of tropes rather than the defining characteristic of a film. I have found this more expressive and useful in analysing portrayals of the Pakistani Other.
The empirical chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, discuss the process by which individual tropes within a broader theme/collection of tropes were identified and defined, as well as list and categorize these tropes, and provide the evidence.

The research questions

The literature to date is largely built around detailed analyses of a single film, or a small group of films. While this can provide a deep discussion of a particular film's leanings, it cannot represent/describe Indian Hindi cinema. This thesis seeks to move these discussions of specific films to a wider understanding beyond these specifics to the totality of Indian films about Pakistan. While the analysis will use examples to highlight particular trends, this will be done in the light of an understanding of the total canon.

In that regard, the analysis of the following chapters are structured around a number of key questions.

(1) How does Indian Hindi Cinema create, or represent a hostile othering of Pakistan and Pakistanis that can serve to propel hostilities into the present and the future, and even project and incite hatred?

(2) Does Indian film represent or create a common culture and identity and ethics (ethos), in a way that such an embrace threatens the very otherness that the Pakistani national identity is seeking to create, or does it reflect and encourage peace and harmony between two countries and peoples?

Conclusion

This chapter has expanded on the significance of the topic and contextualizes the portrayal of Pakistan in Hindi film, thus providing the ballast for the theoretical analysis of the thesis. It touches on the theoretical cornerstones of Identity and Othering, so that these are signposted for the reader in this first chapter and the logical connections can be laid out; further important parts of the theoretical discussion on Othering are developed in Chapter 2 as the methodology is elaborated. Thus this chapter provides the background and context for the detailed analysis that forms the crux of the following chapters.

The next chapter explores this theoretical discussion in further detail, as it links it to the methodological choices and challenges in achieving these research objectives.

Chapter 2 – Othering and Methodological Choices

The chapter begins with a reference to the four main patterns of portrayal, the major trope areas, which I have referred to as themes, and continues with a detailed discussion of Othering and how that concept is an essential one for an analysis of how Pakistan is represented in Indian film. The chapter then proceeds to discuss the methodological choices in the research project, how films were identified, selected, viewed and analysed, and how I decided which themes and tropes to use to categorise the huge quantity of data to make sense of it for the reader. Consequently it provides the methodological and theoretical underpinning for the thesis.

In order to address the research questions set out at the end of the last chapter, the thesis explores how Indian Hindi cinema presents Pakistan and Pakistanis in four distinct patterns.

(1) The Introspective theme or collection of introspective tropes are those where Pakistan is portrayed as an accepted entity and a catalyst for looking introspectively within Indian society, these may be somewhat – but not always - congruent with a neutral portrayal.

(2) The collection of Hostile tropes or those expressing hostile themes are generally those where Pakistan is portrayed as the Enemy Other, again with a caveat that this is not always so.

(3) Between the hostile tropes and the reconciliatory tropes which I discuss last, there is a plethora of tropes which are, intentionally or unintentionally, not easy to define as either hostile or friendly, and are "clearly ambiguous", and which I designate as the Ambiguous tropes.

(4) Finally there is the theme of Peace and Reconciliation, an acceptance perhaps leading to friendship or a reconciliation on which this Other, Pakistan may be Embraced.

While these four categories are seemingly distinct, each includes complexity and contradictions, so that ultimately the level of analysis is not the entire film, but rather

scenes and elements within films, utilising a series of tropes which were found to be commonly used in the analysed material.

Othering in the context of this research

In this chapter I will expand my discussion on how, in Indian films referring to Pakistan, it is necessary to establish Pakistan/Pakistanis as an Other, in order to address the issues of India and Pakistan. This is not a matter of intentionally or unintentionally choosing to Other; films that wish to address the issues that arise out of the fact that India and Pakistan are Others for each other, in their discourse, their imagination and their reality, must represent this reality in their story. Even in films where this is not the focus of the film, or in films where the focus may be to own or embrace this Other, to erase this Othering through stressing a common Indo-Pak culture, the issues cannot be addressed even superficially unless the Other is defined as such.

In Indian film's portrayal of Pakistanis, I have differentiated a number of ways in which Othering is expressed. Some films may foreground one particular aspect of othering, others will express different forms within the one film. The question is of what is done with the Other after this defining.

This very need to establish the Other also speaks to the aspect of Othering that I wish to address in the thesis, which is Othering out of Sameness. Because in the context of India and Pakistan, the Other has been created out of a context of Sameness, there is a constant need to reiterate this Othering, this difference. There is a need to clarify and establish this Other, because the Other is not immediately visible. And because of this, no matter how much Othering is established and propagated, the undercurrent of sameness persists.

This Other having been created out of such a context of sameness is an exceptional Othering, even if not unique. It is a different Othering for example, even to that between West and East Pakistanis who did not live together in a meaningful or widespread sense, different to Othering the groups that may be geographically, ethnically, and most important of all, linguistically different. While all 'othering' is socially constructed and often includes potential concepts of sameness, in the Hindi-Urdu-Hindustani Pakistan-North Indian nexus to whom the Hindi films are "their own", despite all the differences, there are just too many elements of 'sameness' to be ignored. For those whose main

language falls within these linguistic parameters, there is that constant willing and unwilling reminder/existence of the fact or the question not just that we are similar, or we are the same, but that *we are kin*, which I have judged to be adding another dimension to the already complicated concept of Owning. It is this intense form of Owning that I have designated as Embrace, this is not just an owning of the Other, or an accepting of the Other, but an Embrace of the kinship with the Other.

It is this Othering and this Embrace that I attempt to categorize in different tropes. I will look not simply at the dominant narrative, negative or positive, towards Indian Hindi cinema's portrayal of Pakistan, but elaborate them into different tropes, in order to understand these othering or embracing practices, within these narratives. This is expressed through two substantial research questions;

(1) How does Indian Hindi Cinema create, or represent a hostile othering that serves to propel the hostilities into the present and the future, and incite hatred?

(2) How does Indian film represent or create a common culture and identity and ethics (ethos), and does such an embrace threaten the very otherness that the Pakistani national identity is seeking to create, or alternatively does it reflect and encourage peace and harmony between the two countries and peoples?

It is clear that Indian Hindi cinema is not uniform, different films represent different points of view, and indeed one film may articulate more than one point of view. There may be a dominant narrative, but it is not unchallenged. Therefore it is more useful to look at the different tropes that these films employ, there are competing narratives, which can be classified as hostile or reconciliatory or more complicated than this. "… the same film would be very progressive in some areas while being terribly regressive elsewhere."[284]

Films, particularly those of a pre-partition era, can focus on the commonalities, and take the line that there was no need for creating Pakistan, implying that Pakistan really has no reason to exist. In its effort to establish commonalities, it is immediately Othering Pakistan as a mistake, as unjustified, a premise unacceptable to most Pakistanis, and also

[284] Joshi, 2021

to current existing reality. Similarly, other films may focus on commonalities but stress the angle that given these commonalities, there is no reason for a perpetuation of hostilities between India and Pakistan, in the present and looking forwards. Given that most films do not offer any deeply analytical or factual look at history, films that only express the commonalities, may deny the felt alienation and/or discrimination of Muslims which led to the creation of Pakistan. Films that talk about love across the India-Pakistan divide, like *Veer Zara* (2004), *Border Hindustan ka* (2003), *Total Siyappa* (2014), *Bajrangi Bhaijan* (2015), even *Gadar* (2001), generally have to gloss over/dramatise the real practicalities because if they got mired down in these, it would be hard to move on with the story!

It is worth stating at the outset that even when articulating different points of view, the dominant message of a film may foreground a hostile Othering, or peace and harmony, or introspection. There are clear ways in which Othering is expressed, by creating fear of the Other, violence is always retaliatory or defensive. Violence is on a spectrum, maybe starting with words, using dehumanizing language to hate speech, to falsification of facts. The vehicle for your speech and action is the powerfully influential medium of film.[285]

The dominant assumption is that Indian cinema sees Pakistan as The Enemy, sometimes "just" as The Enemy, the military enemy, but also often promoting war or terrorism, and such films can be seen equally clearly as themselves promoting hostility and hatred. But even these films have different strands. There are those which use Pakistan as the Other, when the story requires an Other, the Other requires only to be the Villain, and has no Pakistan-specific characteristics. So Villainy becomes the only Pakistan-specific characteristic. Then there are films that may portray the bulk of Pakistanis to be "the same as us", it is certain minority - but powerful - groups, possibly the military, the government, the religious establishment, the ISI, even business interests, or even colonial and neo-colonial powers, which have vested motives in inciting hatred. And of these tropes, there are those films for whom this is the whole context of the story, in which Pakistanis "stand up" to these minority negative interests in their establishment, and are therefore on the same moral side as India, which is generally, definitely on the moral side. *Lahore* (2010), *Agent Vinod* (2012), are such films, where India has a discernible moral

[285] Dhruv Rathee, 2024

high ground. In *Pathaan* (2023), and *Phantom* (2015) India's failings are also part of the story, but in the final analysis, India's heart is in the right place, despite the use of torture on the Pakistani woman (*Pathaan)*, despite the injustice to an Indian Muslim military officer *(Phantom)*, despite Indian culpability…. These films do not present India in a halo, but still, it is India that is deserving of their loyalty, it is their country, and when all is said and done, it is still also the better place. This is natural for Indian cinema, nor can more be possible for commercial cinema, given the constraints of the trio of the censor, the box-office and the mob.

There is definitely a section of films which present Pakistan through a clearly hostile lens. Pakistan/Pakistanis are shown as a violent collective, often through the image of war or terrorism, with perhaps a single individual lone dissenter in a sea of violence, a single questioning soldier in the Pakistan army in Bangladesh[286] (who is immediately shot by the Pakistan army as in *Ab Tumhare Hawale Watan Saathiyo* (2004) or the odd Pakistani, the poster-boy for such films is *Gadar* (2001). In this sense, as Grider says ;

> "Othering is Manufactured prejudice, with a product that stokes feelings of distrust and loathing, [and this] power to depict certain "others" as innately strange and dangerous—as foul creatures not like the rest of us—is surely as devastating as the physical force of weaponry."[287]

Shaheen himself writes, how, "Without the audience even realizing it – they wreak their damaging psychological havoc on us all, inflaming bigotry …."[288] and how difficult it is to debunk such fixed images. [289]

Some of these films do not spare their own government, and present a criticism of Indian action and inaction, *Upkar* **(**1967), *Baby* **(**2015), *Dil Jale* (1996), perhaps even *Border* (1997)**,** each film diametrically different to the other. There are fewer films, where there is a direct criticism of Indian actions (as opposed to inaction), *Main hoon na* (2004), may be considered one such, an Indian officer summarily kills a dozen Pakistani civilians including a child, but he is court martialled and dismissed from the army, (however this punishment hardly is commensurate with the crime). *Yahaan* (2005) also shows a

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[286] *Meherjaan (*2011), *Ab Tumhare Hawale Watan Saathiyo* (2004)
[287] Greider, in Shaheen, 2009, foreword
[288] Shaheen, 2009, 3
[289] Shaheen, 2009, 6

significant incident of an Indian army officer beating a civilian woman. There is, predictably, also a complete genre of the more "jingo-istic" films where Pakistan is critiqued and treated with hostility, and Pakistanis presented as virtual caricatures, where India is only treated as the occupiers of the high moral ground. *Gadar* **(**2001), *The Hero* **(**2003)**,** *Zameen* **(**2003)**,** *Asambhav* (2004)**,** *16th December* (2002) and countless others are in this category. There are, of course, many self-critical Indian films, dealing with India itself, but this thesis is only looking at films which include references to Pakistan.

In *Roja* (1992), *Dil Se* (1998), *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata* (2002), in *Mission Kashmir* (2000), in *Yahan* (2005), it is the "Indian terrorist" who is given a voice to speak to India, he is still "our own" for India, and "*tum hamare ho*" (You are ours/you belong to us) (*Bharat Bhagya Vidhata* 2002). The offer for reconciliation is open to this player, but Pakistan/the Pakistani in the background is clearly the villain. While *Mission Kashmir* (2000), *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata* (2002), have finales with dramatic and impossible reconciliations, in *Yahan* (2005) the terrorist is arrested after renouncing his cause, in *Roja* (1992)he is allowed to escape and reconsider, and in *Dil se* (1998) the solution is a more nihilistic one, but wherever Pakistani is in the background, it is always the cynical manipulator of poor misguided Indians (generally Muslims).

But there is also a section of Indian film, that places itself in a common culture, an identity and an ethics, where these commonalities seek to dissipate the Otherness of Pakistan. And if so, what is the logical conclusion of this? Firstly that there is no need for enmity, as we have too much in common? But if so, then what is the reason for Pakistan to exist? So within this very Embrace are both of the complementary concepts of acceptance of Pakistanis/pre-Pakistanis as our own and therefore rejection of the two-nation theory and therefore of the very idea of Pakistan, and this should theoretically be unacceptable to the Pakistani national identity, which is based on being the Other. Is the display of love and fraternity simply a veneer, a suffocating embrace, papering over fears and insecurities on both sides, and therefore provides no real resolutions to the conflict? Or does this philosophical disjunct hold out any real possibilities of peace and harmony? That is established partly by the very context of the film, rather than simple dialogue, but the dialogue is the means by which competing ideas can be presented.

Othering in Film

Ed Guererro says that "we live in an electronically mediated techno culture, where one's screen image determines so much about one's political fortunes and one's collective fate."[290] Whether it is the state, or "popular" culture, (of which film is an expression), Dimitrova elaborates;

> "It is the narrative of power that defines otherism; the owner of the discourse is the party which sees itself in the position of power to other the other party and marginalizes it by producing meanings about it as different or inferior. This could be the 'West' Othering the 'Rest' or India othering the 'West,' or Hinduism Othering its many Others who are non-Hindus…."[291]

Wallenius and Bhat, looking at the partition literature of Finland and India, say that 'otherness' is recognizable, "particularly in the areas of power and national identity; communalism …..".[292]

It is the power and ability to deny Belonging that creates the Other. But this power also inherently contains the possibility and the opportunity to Own the Other, to confer, to offer to the Other the inclusion of an Embrace. And then we move on another step, where this Other may accept or reject the embrace.

Is Othering by its very nature only of inferiors, only negative? Is there an exotic Other? Or a superior Other? Or is it only Othering when depicting a group of people as "different" from the "norm", in a negative way, a negatively "stereotyped Other"? Or can Othering simply recognize difference in a neutral way? Resende discusses how "current and past conflicts seem to evidence that othering is negatively biased, with differentiation as well as distancing from the Other. There is thus further value in elucidating the question if othering is necessarily a negatively tainted process, that is, if the Other is always seen in a negative light. The academic debate diverges on this. Diez [293] argues that the Other can also be seen as neutral. For Hansen, however, there are always views of superiority and inferiority, thus hierarchy." [294]

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[290] Friedman, 2009, vi
[291] Dimitrova, 2016
[292] Wallenius and Bhat, 2017
[293] Deiz 2005, (628-29), as quoted in Resende, 2020, 238
[294] Hansen 2006, as quoted in Resende, 2020, 238

Specifically, film can be a "sensitive and ostracizing place for marginalized groups. These depictions created popular visions of minorities as "other" or alien to the *rest of society* (Italics mine)." [295] Their actions are portrayed in a negative light, from the point of view of the teller of the history/story; portraying the native Americans as blood thirsty and primitive, rather than defending their native land [296] against marauding invaders; presenting Kashmiri militants as terrorists rather than freedom fighters; presenting India as supporting the Bengali freedom struggle rather than as invaders or interfering in the national affairs of others; but to present Pakistan as supporting terrorism while doing something similar in Kashmir; presenting loyalty to the Indian state as sacrosanct for Kashmiris, Sikhs, or Assamese, but loyalty to the Pakistani state not being necessary for East Bengalis; glorifying the annexation of Hyderabad by India,[297] but condemning the same in Kashmir by Pakistan. "Reason, progress, organization, discipline, history itself, belongs to the state and the ruling classes; violence belongs to the Other, those left behind by history."[298] The issue is "who is granted agency, whose history we seek to write, and whose pain and suffering therefore matters." [299] So whose story do you decide to tell? [300] Directors may not want to appear empathetic to terrorists, yet they have to cater to many opinions. One fascinating example is Mani Ratnam's *Dil Se* (1998) where the protagonist (superstar Shahrukh Khan) is the voice of the majority, of the Indian state, but his love interest is woman from the North East, a victim of child-rape by state forces, now a terrorist. The pain shown in the film is that of the Other, and a voice is given to the Other, not just this woman but her compatriots and leaders, although the protagonist, the representative of the Self and the state, argues against them to the last. But what the film does establish is that the Self cannot be free, or safe, as long as it ignores the pain of the Other. "Film plays a large part in how non-normative groups are represented, understood and viewed in society."[301]

So is Othering always negative? Always a "bad thing"? My contention is that Othering is not necessarily *hostile*. When Othering is a reality in the social context, to ignore the

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[295] Tilton, 2019
[296] ibid
[297] *Razakar* (2024)
[298] Pande, Gyanendra, 1994, 193
[299] Pande, Gyanendra, 1994, 194
[300] The Family Man, an Amazon Original Indian series, briefly tells the back story of the terrorists. There is obviously difference between Amazon's international audiences and a domestic Indian audience.
[301] Tilton, 2019

reality may be equivalent to refusing to face reality, avoiding dealing with facts, leaving the issue unaddressed. So before studying the contexts of Othering, let us be clear as to what we mean by Othering.

The Other in our story

Is it possible to tell a story in which there is no Other? Stories require protagonists, and even when perhaps, they do not require antagonists, they require "other" protagonists. In a story about India and Pakistan, from an Indian perspective, by defining someone as a Pakistani, you automatically Other them, and all the more so, when the story is about that very difference, about the Othering itself.

How one "others" in a film is not simple. Each character is an Other to the other character and has his or her own unique characteristics. How then to distinguish this from the complex Othering that actually creates Someone who does not Belong? A film may simply be representing the fact that Othering is a present reality, and actually be attempting to address this issue from a positive perspective, may actually wish to confound this othering, may wish to create an inclusion. Sometimes the motivation is to establish commonalities. So first, or maybe later, you have to show the ways that allow us to be called different. This technique is followed literally in the film *PK* (2014). *PK* presents characters in markers of visible difference, and then simply removes these markers. *Dharmaputra* (1961), shows all the visible markers, and then confounds them all with the story of innate sameness.

This Other may look different, dress differently, speak differently, may be women, black people, white people, traditional Muslims, orthodox Jews, Hindus with tilak, wearing the crucifix, indigenous communities; by showing these very realities, by highlighting them, sometimes by exaggerating them, we can consider that there is Othering. In Hindi cinema, the prostitute, the other woman, the untouchable/Dalit, and other othered groups were shown in films - sometimes as the Other and sometimes as the Protagonist - as early as 1925.[302] In the context of film, the establishing of an Other, is almost (although not

[302] *Savkari Pash* 1925 (peasants and money lenders) *Kulin Kanta* 1925 (courtesan), *Jeevan Naiya* 1936 ("dancing girls"), *Jeevan Prabhat* 1937 (caste system, women), *Kisan Kanya* 1937 (poor farmers), *Amar Jyoti* 1937 (woman), *Achhut* 1940, *Nartaki* (courtesan)1940, *Kismet* (disabled woman) 1943, *Zeenat* (widow) 1945

always) a necessary pre-requisite to addressing the issues in question. There was a time, when such issues were not stated openly, the language was obtuse, "polite", the othering was "under the table", and so addressing the issues was also dealt with in an evasive manner. As Friedman asks, could such stories "be told successfully without the foundational premises about the "other"?" [303] After all, if these stereotypical associations are not addressed, they remain the elephant in the room.[304]

Because the other face of Othering, the mirror image, can be "presenting" diversity, of "boldly" and "openly" "addressing" difference. If one does not present the difference, if one does not present the Other, how will one address the issues of "othering" or of the Othered? Before "othering" happens in media, it exists in society, it exists in "real life". It may be exaggerated, augmented, blown out of proportion, or ignored, swept under the table, by the media. Friedman, in Performing Difference, focuses on the positives of presenting diversity, of presenting a narrative to those (*and by those and of those*) who have hitherto been excluded.[305] Film reviews of Hindi cinema, also often focus on the simple positive, while academic reviewers tend to focus on the subtle negative.

"Bollywood melodrama repeatedly glosses over difference and 'ventriloquises' for whole nations and peoples in a monolithic voice."[306] Certainly it can, as does most populist and political dogma and statements. Specially through the voice of "the hero". But in fact, film, through different characters, speaks in different voices, it can show different stories. In *Dil Se* (1998), most obviously through the female lead, but also interestingly and respectfully, through the Naxal leader. Mani Ratnam, the director, allows his antagonists to be as articulate as his protagonist, even when the protagonist is Shahrukh Khan[307], and then allows the film to say the rest. In *Roja* (1992), through the Kashmiri terrorist, in *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973), through the Pakistani, in *Pathaan* (2023), through the ISI agent and "Jim", in *Sarfarosh* (1999), through the Indian Muslim, even through the Pakistani artist-terrorist. Villains speak, the director chooses how articulate they are. Film can show argument and discussion, and allow the Other to express his point of view, even when they may be at odds with the protagonist. Film allows this Other to say only what

[303] Friedman, 2009, ix
[304] Friedman, 2009, Introduction
[305] Friedman, 2009, 5
[306] Munjal in Bharat and Kumar 2008, 92
[307] India's greatest superstar

the director wants or finds acceptable, (and the Censor, and the mob), and they may say it only in order to be refuted, but if film wishes to be credible, and even if that is the only reason, it allows the Other to have a voice. This may be the only "Other" voice that audiences who are ideologically on the "other side" ever hear, given that the audience chooses which films to watch. This is how I would interpret Bakhtin's conceptualization of heteroglossia, film being "a composite of 'utterances', social languages and voices which anticipate, engage and respond to one another." [308] The power of how to present the Other, is however, with the film makers, but ultimately with the Censor, and finally, with the audience, who make it a hit or a flop.

Friedman elaborates his question,

> "Who or what groups are represented? Who is doing the representing, that is who is in charge of the portrayal? The out-group? The in-group? Who has historically been in charge of the portrayal, and how has this changed over time? What is the forum for the production? The large-scale feature of the independent venue? What is the intended audience? What is the audience reaction? Is the intention to change audience perception? Has this been successful?" [309]

Except for notable exceptions, it is impossible to embrace the Other or to go beyond the othering, without first defining them as the Other. Firstly, where the Other is already you, that is not the story that we are looking at. Secondly, everyone is an Other with nuances, and the nuances are far too open to interpretation, and encompass too many variables. Mine would be only one interpretation, others may see it in a different way, as Shakuntala Banaji shows clearly in her audience interviews. [310]

Semantically, this is expressed in an interesting way in Hindi cinema, which reflects the complementarity of the Other. Intentionally, or unintentionally, many films often refer to Pakistan, even when un-named, in relative terms like "*vahaan*" (there), "*oos par*" (across "that" side), *dushman mulk* (enemy country), *parosi mulk* (neighbouring country). For every "there", there is a "here" (*yahaan)*, for every "that side", there is a this side, for every "enemy" country, there is the home country, for every neighbour there must be another. *Garam Hawa* (1974) also refers to "*Toofan vahan bhi, yahan bhi*." ("The storm

[308] Woods, 24
[309] Friedman, 2009, viii (as in Sangam)
[310] Banaji, 2008, 157-175

is there also, here also".) These are words that contain within themselves the complementariness of owning and othering, the connotation that the other is a mirror image of the self. Almost all Kashmir films, use this terminology, as it is used in the Valley; one Kashmir-film is called simply, "*Yahan*" (2005), simply, "Here" implicitly includes a "there". In *Veer Zara* **(**2004), when the Indian Veer arrives in Lahore, he sings the song "*Maen yahan hoon*" (I am here) with a mixture of disbelief, pride, emphasis, which is also a twist on how "*vahan*" (there) is now transformed to "*yahan*" (here) by his presence. In *Shaurya* (2008) the army officer in Kashmir, accuses a young boy, and a junior army officer (a Muslim), "You eat from *here*, but pray for *there*", the word Pakistan is absent. In the film *Sadiyaan* (2010), is the song;

> The colour of pain here, is the same there
> The fragrance of love there, is here too
> Stories begin there
> but breaking borders, mending hearts,
> they come here.

Who is the Self?

So Othering in this context is when the protagonist is one that the audience is automatically assumed to or invited to - identify with, the Normative Self. But who is the audience? Is the audience male or female? If male, is the female the Other, or vice versa? Or, in the typical traditional romantic film, do the two halves form a single whole, yin and yang? What if the "protagonist" is a child - an orphan child of unknown antecedents and unknown faith as in *Dhool ka phool* (1959)? Who is the Other in *Dharmputra* (1961) where the film begins with two men from two different generations and faiths, and a woman? You wonder if the woman is the main female character, but she is not. In *Bangistan* (2015), there are two protagonists, what makes the audience individually decide which to identify with, when both are off the "norm", and antagonists to each other? In *Bajrangi Bhaijan* (2015), who is the protagonist, the titular character, or the little girl and where does the third character fit? So if there is an issue of identification of the protagonist, then surely Othering is equally or even more amorphous?

There was a time when conventional wisdom regarding Hollywood films based in overseas locations or even discussing black people's issues in America,[311] considered that a white English-speaking, generally male, character was necessary for the audience to identify with.[312] Even Mandela's South Africa had to be viewed through this lens, as in *Invictus* (2009). Then what about the global Hollywood audience? Even disregarding this, and looking at the potential "normative" Hollywood audience, this audience too is only 50 per cent male….. not even wholly white, so how much more complicated this situation would be in India, where the large majority of the audience would be "Hindu"? And would that include Dalits? And Hindu women? And the vast number of "non-Hindus" in the audiences for Indian cinema? Is the film for the "masses" or the "classes", (these days for "classes" read the multiplex audiences as versus the single screen/ small town audiences – the masses). As Vasudevan says,

> "Indian film audiences were not one but many, and the institution of the cinema did not automatically guarantee a single audience unified by social, cultural, and intellectual orientations. The most commonplace discursive segmentation of audiences lay across the rural–urban divide, but audiences were in certain trade circles conceived of in terms of gender and generational difference (women, children, and college-going youth), religious persuasion (orthodox and devout audiences, usually meaning Hindus, Muslim audiences being separately referred to) and class configured audiences (intellectuals, middleclass, and "masses").[313]

Hollywood has its films on Martin Luther King Jr, its *Mandela* (2013***),*** *Missing Figures* **(**2016), *Moonlight* (2016), and a host of other films with black/non-white/women protagonists), and Hindi cinema has a whole genre of the "Muslim socials" which have a wholly "Muslim milieu" (however stereotypical or imaginary this may be). The very fact that there was and still is, a genre of film called the "Muslim Social", which was all about Muslim families and the Muslim social milieu is evidence of the deeply held nature of this Othering**.** But now, Muslim Socials are blurring at the edges, films like *Bobby Jasoos* (2014) and *Gully Boy* (2019) cannot be straitjacketed simply as Muslim Socials. Then

[311] Killing Fields (1984), Salvador (1986), Missing (1982), Cry Freedom (1987), Mississippi Burning (1988), Million dollar arm (2014)
[312] Tilton, 2019
[313] Vasudevan, 2015

there are films where the main character is Muslim and dealing with "Muslim" "issues" such as *Chak de* (2007)**,** *My Name is Khan* (2010)**,** *Mulk* (2018), and Pakistan is a factor**.**

There are indeed films that overcome this Othering, *Padosi* (1941)**,** *Coolie* (1983) (where Amitabh Bachchan played a Muslim hero in a non-"Muslim-social" film, for a long time were some of the few, if not the only exceptions**,** but since, there have been *Gully Boy* (2019), *Fighter* **(**2024) etc, *Qayamat* (2003) and even *Tere bin Laden* (2010). In these films, the protagonist is a Muslim, whose religious identity is visible, but unimportant to the story.

And who is the protagonist/main character in films like in *Bajrangi Bhaijan (*2015)? Or *Total Siyapa* (2014)? Then there are "saviour" films, as opposed to the terrifying idea of joint action by the oppressed themselves. So how do you choose the protagonist for an Indian film? In "Muslim social" films, often the "protagonist" is a woman, it may be the stereotypical courtesan of *Pakeezah* (1972), or the rebel *Bobby Jasoos* (2014), and there have been many women-centric films in many genres, the courtesan, the Untouchable girl, the scientist and the sportswoman.

Banaji feels that "At a textual level, … certain sequences in a number of Hindi films dealing with India and Pakistan invite some viewers to think of themselves as "other". [314] And yet Pakistanis audiences too are simply on the "hero's side", the villains are simply the film villains, and are simply called Pakistani out of habit and history. We need to look at what is foregrounded. "An overarching issue … is the extent to which the performing arts construct authentic and sympathetic visions of the "other".[315]

Othering therefore is central to an analysis of Indian Hindi film. It would be hard to conduct any serious analysis without it. It is not however a simple binary othering and even antagonistic portrayals have complex elements within them. It is therefore necessary to unpick the potentially simple divide of hostile and reconciliatory films (or even scenes) and explore how these broad themes of hostility and reconciliation are represented in practice. I have done this by developing and analysing the most common tropes which are used to represent Pakistan and Pakistanis. This was at the heart of the methodological choices for this thesis.

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[314] Banaji, 2008, 174
[315] Friedman, ix

Methodological Choices

In developing a methodology to analyse the key themes in the canon of Indian Hindi film which deals with or represents Pakistan, the first decision to make was to define the canon.

To do this, I have viewed films that have focused on Pakistan, that have focused on the India-Pakistan relationship, and those that have mentioned Pakistan, even in a single peripheral sentence. To make the research more manageable, for practical reasons, I had to set some limits. The biggest challenge I faced was the wealth of material, and deciding what to leave out.

As the thesis focuses on films in which there is an India-Pakistan interaction to analyse, I decided to leave out, firstly, those 3 films about Pakistan, in which there is no interaction between India and Pakistan. Secondly, I decided to leave out films about the Mumbai bombings and 26/11, and thirdly, the films directly about the independence of Bangladesh in 1971. These second and third categories were of a different character and in the highly emotive context of the allegations against Pakistan, it was not possible that these films could present Pakistan in a non-negative way, in practice they presented a straightforward vilification of Pakistan, sometimes with a "good" Pakistani, as in Pippa (2023). Including them would skew the sample, compared to the generality of film over time, which in any case included a significant proportion of hostile films. I have looked at films about Kashmir only as far as their relevance to Pakistan goes, and not in detail as to how they present the context, but to leave out the all the Kashmir-related films would have also have skewed the canon unrealistically. I have analysed these films about Kashmir, but essentially only looking at how Pakistan is portrayed, and not at how other aspects of the conflict are presented. I did this also as the question of Kashmir is, in many respects, at the heart of the India-Pakistan relationship. It has remained an issue since 1947, in every time period and so does not change the canon, in the same way as a single event such as the 2008 attacks, or even the more long-term aftermath of Bangladesh's independence.

Thirdly, after considerable research, I decided to jettison films in which there are only "peripheral mentions", which are generally ignored, although these have a certain

importance, as unexpected, "stray mentions" are what reaches these unconverted. Nevertheless, I decided to concentrate on films of which Pakistan is a more major part.

It is not always possible to classify complete films as hostile or reconciliatory, as most films, even those with a clear final message, do have different strands, which speak differently to different viewers. I therefore considered that it would be most useful to discuss different tropes that the films present, and analyse these tropes. Some films are consistent in their portrayals, but normally, in the same film we can often see tropes which are clearly hostile, others clearly reconciliatory and some ambiguous, at different stages in the narrative. I also include, and I begin with a number of films for which I have used the classification of 'introspective' trope, one of the more consistent tropes. These are films in which Pakistan is not foregrounded, in some cases it is off-screen, and in all cases it is not a player. It is present in order to examine India, the Indian polity, the Indian social fabric, an introspection of the Self. But here, the Other, Pakistan, is a part of this Self, part of the Self's own story, and therefore Sameness and Othering is intrinsic. It is this introspection which is the focus of the film, where such films have used other tropes which express more obvious sameness and othering, I have discussed those aspects in the relevant chapters.

The Challenges

The first challenge was to identify the films. There is no comprehensive list, and I used what lists are available through imdb, as well as other sources in building the canon of film. I used word searches and looked at all the blurbs of films available since 1947. I began with those which were well-known, those addressed and referenced in the literature. As a dedicated viewer, I also had personal knowledge of a large number of the more peripheral films. I reached out to a significant number of people from diverse backgrounds, who have an expert knowledge of Indian Hindi film – in both India and in Pakistan, and further afield. As my research developed and I discussed it in various fora, people sent me some new material or made other suggestions. Each of these methods yielded forgotten, lesser known and barely discussed films, which helped to build up my universe. As the range of new material which I had not already viewed ran out I was confident that I had, at the very least, an almost complete list of films.

The second challenge was to find the films, in order to view them. While it is impossible to say that this research has looked at every single film in which Pakistan has been mentioned, there will be very few relevant films that I have not viewed. Obviously Youtube and the well known OTT platforms were the first port of call. Some films that were not available on the internet were available on dvds, on cds, on different continents, (sometimes at exorbitant prices!). I ordered some to different continents to different friends and family members and found people willing to carry them to eventually reach me by different routes. Finally there were a very small number of films that I was unable to view in any meaningful way. I believe that this is the most comprehensive work done on Indian films that mention Pakistan and (while inevitably not entirely exhaustive) includes the most comprehensive list available of such films, but it cannot be entirely exhaustive.

Appendix 1 is a complete list of all the films with an India-Pakistan reference that I have viewed for this study, both on free and paid access. This was the complete universe that was accessible to me, and I did not sample this, but every single accessible film in the universe was viewed in its entirety or its most lengthily available format. The tropes have been developed out of this comprehensive viewing, with the full and complete canon in perspective. To highlight each trope I have chosen scenes which best illustrate those particular tropes, trying to spread them over well-known films and lesser known ones.

The four films which were not available in at least two-thirds complete form by ANY means, are marked as FNF (Film not Found) and have been viewed through small sections which are available, but I have avoided using these four films in my analysis as there was not enough reliable context, frustratingly two of them were found/available after completion of the thesis. The list also includes films which allude to Pakistan, and were viewed with an expectation of a Pakistani reference but found to have no direct meaningful reference to Pakistan, these are marked as NMOP (No Mention of Pakistan). Appendix 2 contains a full list of the films showing the gap years as well in which no films were made with India-Pakistan reference. Appendix 3 is a list of films which do not have mention of Pakistan, but were consulted for context for this research, for a variety of purposes, such as pre-Partition films depicting communal attitudes, thereby by inference attitudes towards the creation of Pakistan, or films which depicted a variety of Others, which gave political context. In addition, my personal wide viewing of Indian cinema, also provides a general context, it is not possible to mention every such film.

The third challenge was to classify and interpret such a polysemic medium. Not only do different people read the same film differently, but the same person may interpret a film differently at different times. Were films hostile, reconciliatory, positive, negative…. People argued *Gaddar* (2001) was not anti-Pakistan, or that *Raazi* (2018) was. Are *Lahore* (2010) and *War chhod na yaar* reconciliatory ? And *Welcome 2 Karachi* (2015) ?

While it not practicable or possible to mention each and every single film, formulation of the tropes and all analysis has been made in the context of the whole universe. I considered the most accurate way to examine the portrayal of Pakistan would be through the text, that is the "dialogue" of the film, and in addition, I have used reviews, some published interviews, interviews with key personnel/experts, and other analyses as supporting material.

The fourth and the biggest challenge was to do justice to all the material, over 150 films, within my word limit. There are many films I have not been able to mention, but they have obviously contributed to the analysis.

I sought to view the films through a popular lens in the Gramscian sense[316], through the eyes of a lay audience interested in entertainment. While a researcher can never place themselves in the position of another, and this is not an audience study, I nonetheless sought to categorise films as I felt they would be perceived. This is of course my judgement and therefore my analysis – but this was the frame by which I tried to do it. I have tried to keep the Indian audience and the Pakistani gaze and fuse them into an objective one as far as it is possible. So when I have judged a portrayal as hostile, it means there has been little room to judge it differently. It is for others to judge how successfully I have done that, but the thesis itself includes sufficient reference to the canon of film to allow others to do that.

An additional practical challenge was that most films are not available to view in an authorized or standardized format. There are multiple versions, available or unavailable over different periods. Even when available on dvds or authorized sites, they differ in length by many minutes, with credits cut out, songs or dialogue or excerpts shortened or removed. So in common with standard practice in political texts discussing Indian cinema

[316] Gramsci, 2011.

(eg., Bharat amd Kumar, *Filming the Line of Control*, 2008; Bharat, *Shooting Terror,* 2020; also see Bibliography), I have not time stamped quotations from films.

Identifying the tropes

Each film was viewed a number of times, all portions mentioning Pakistan were transcribed and tropes classified and analysed. I have used original dialogue extensively. Even where audiences are familiar with the films, while certain phrases enter the lexicon, others may simply be overlooked. The tropes were not developed from the literature, but rather iteratively as I watched and analysed the films. I began with many more categories or tropes, gradually building up more useable and useful categories and tropes as the research evolved.

Following on from my argument that the Other is a given, in films which address the issues of India and Pakistan, based on my draft notes from watching the films, I chose three categorization of tropes, the first where the Other is part of the Story of the self, secondly where the Other is hostilely Othered, and thirdly where the Other is Embraced in a spirit of friendship and Reconciliation. I have labelled these the Introspective, the Hostile and the Reconciliatory tropes, and further divided the second two into minor tropes. In addition I have a full section on Ambiguous tropes. This is inevitable, not simply because of the polysemic nature of the medium, but because there is a vast chasm between the Indian intention and the Pakistani gaze. I have classified them as tropes that frequently appear in relation to India and Pakistan, they may be judged according to their context in the film, and perhaps according to the value system of the audience, for example the portrayal of the Loyal Indian Muslim, or of Secularism.

Following a categorisation of the text of dialogues in the films, and based on tropes which occurred most often, or in a few cases tropes which I thought were significant enough to include even if not commonly used, I developed the following categories and sub-categories for analysis.

1 The Introspective trope in different genres

2 Hostile tropes

- The Other as a Villain
- Paternalism/Hierarchy
- Denying Othering

3 Ambiguous tropes

- Differentiating the Pakistani state from the Pakistani people
- Loyal Indian Muslim
- Secularism.
- Hindu Muslim love and marriage
- Exoticization, Mispronunciation
- Culpability

4 Reconciliatory tropes

- Sameness
- Representation of Pakistani women
- Refusing to demonize Pakistan/Finding another Other

5 Reconciliatory Trope - Peace

These tropes capture the most common dominant and non-dominant tropes, without overwhelming the reader with too many small differences. They research objective is to analyse the canon, rather than a single film. A different researcher might categorise an individual segment of an individual film differently, honestly coming to a different conclusion as to how it would be perceived, or what the framing was. However in its totality I think the decision on the categorisation of tropes and the analysis above is fair.

All translations from film dialogue and film songs are mine.

How Othering in Indian Film is seen – some examples.

Before proceeding to the chapters which analyse these key tropes in details, it is worth briefly exploring a few prominent examples which give a flavour of the range of complex ways in which 'othering' is performed in the films. In most of these examples, othering is not a simply by means of a villain (those films do exist too), but rather the film represents a complex mix of othering and sameness of overlapping sympathy and hostility. In many cases the 'othering' of a Pakistani is overlaid with 'othering' Indian elites or individuals, and contrasted with a sense of 'sameness' between 'ordinary

people', but it would also be a mistake to assume that this elite versus common person trope is dominant. It too is challenged and contradicted.

In a film like *Rang de Basanti (*2006), each character has characteristics that "other" him/her, there is the Muslim, the rich man, the Hindu nationalist, the Indian woman, the older widow (mother), the establishment in the shape of an idealistic young air force officer, the English woman, othered not simply by her skin-colour and her excruciating Hindi, but also by her outsider's gaze. As each one is presented, another othering characteristic is highlighted, the main character, perhaps the standard Hindu Punjabi, is othered by his eccentricity. In this film, all these "others" embrace each other to make a whole, and the one who takes the longest to be embraced or to embrace is the Hindu nationalist,[317] not the Muslim.[318] In the end, the Other is the corrupt establishment, in which our "own" also partake.

In the film, *Jhootha hi sahi* (2010), the main protagonist, Siddharth, (John Abraham) lives next door to two Pakistanis, Omar (the brother) and Aliya (sister), they are not only the best of friends, live and eat together, and are clearly "family" to each other, they are also business partners (along with one other man - another Other - a gay man) in their bookshop business. Their language is a somewhat different (stereotypically, a rather archaic Urdu for the Pakistanis), and the constant, and very typical teasing bickering between the two/three of them defines one as the Indian and the other as the Pakistani, rather than simply Hindu and Muslims from India, this is a film that overcomes Othering without addressing it.

In *Ek tha Tiger (*2012), "Tiger" (Salman Khan) is the protagonist, a crack RAW agent who spies on Professor Kidwai and his housekeeper, Zoya. He is not only Ours, but on our team. As soon as it is established that Zoya is a Muslim, a potential Other, Salman Khan addresses her father (a star in the sky) to establish that there is no othering on this basis. Typically, love embraces Salman Khan and Zoya before she is Othered, which happens when we realize that she is not just a Pakistani, but an ISI agent. She is then not just Othered, she is established as The Enemy, doing for her country just what Tiger is doing for his. From here to the iconic moment when we see the ISI and RAW teams both shooting at this couple who simply wish to be together, we see the Othering shifting from

[317] who may be an Other in a certain section of society
[318] as increasingly is the perception

the Pakistanis, to the Establishment (Hatred and War), against the Lovers. It is an interesting moment, as ISI and RAW look at each other and realize, despite themselves, that in this project, they are on the same side….. and they are on the same side against "their Own" erstwhile comrades. And for them all, these comrades are now their Others. It addresses the nuances of Oneself and the Other in an unanswerable question. Who is the Other and who is "our Own"/ part of the Self?

In *Bajrangi Bhaijaan (*2015), Salman Khan, a star actor, is definitely the eponymous protagonist, even before we see the film. But in the film, we are first introduced to the little girl, Munni. We know her as a Pakistani, before we see Salman Khan. Not only does the protagonist not know who she is, nobody in the film does, but the audience does know, so she is not an Other to us. She is othered initially by her "lostness", her child-ness, her female-ness. The protagonist, Pawan, deliberately tries to bring her into the fold, by insisting that she is a Brahmin, because of her looks, and yet the auteur is deliberately reinforcing her as the Other, by her insistence on eating meat, by saying the Muslim namaz, by running into the Muslim shrine, and immediately after that, embracing the protagonist, who is horrified by all these markers of her "otherness". She is so much our (the audience's) own, even after she has defined herself as a Pakistani, and the decision is taken that she must be returned, even after that the little nephew of the house and she establish their friendship in silent but visible gestures under the noses of the grownups having the conversation about how to return her to the Other country (often referred to as "dushman mulk", "enemy country", both seriously and in jest). And since she is so much our own, the auteur literally had to create Another Other, in the shape of Chand Nawab, the "Other" Pakistani male. And yet, without being clear as to who is embracing who, the three of them become Our team, against the rest of the world.

In *Indoo ki jawani* **(**2020), the main protagonist is Indoo, a young woman, who invites a young man to her house through a dating app. He is an outsider, or an Other, in a very simple or simplistic way, she is the protagonist, and he is the unknown. But when his Pakistani passport falls out of his pocket, he is deliberately and visibly and "shockingly" Othered. But this is what the story is about, is he really an Other or not? Firstly his "Otherness" is directly addressed. When he meets the other Pakistani, and when he engages in a fight with that other Pakistani to rescue the Indian girl, then is he still the Other or has he embraced the Indian girl? Does she accept/return this embrace? So who is left as the Other, and who is embraced?

Vishwanath and Malik state that in the film *Gadar* (2001) a "monstrous Pakistan" is created through the character of Sakina's father [319], Ashraf Ali, who has become the Mayor of Lahore after migrating to Pakistan, and is totally self-serving, bigoted, violent and duplicitous, and faces no opposition. Sakina is, only legally, not morally, a Pakistani – and it is she who is juxtaposed against her father Ashraf, the baying mob, and other treacherous Pakistanis, only to highlight the depravity of the Pakistanis. At the other extreme, the two Muslim characters are the "good" Pakistani Muslim and the "good Indian Muslim", both caricatured through buffoon characters as the hero's friends, the Pakistani appears in a cameo with "a cantankerous wife and 12 children in tow"[320] but upholds the value of friendship and loyalty that transcends the physical boundaries of the divided states. The Indian Muslim friend, willingly gives up his life for his Sikh friend, although he is resurrected in the end. Thus we see the Muslim characters occupying the spaces of the villain and the buffoon played by actors recognisable as such, whereas the Sikh protagonist is the heroic Sunny Deol and named after Tara Singh.[321]

In the film *Jab tak hai jaan* 2012, another similar character is played as a Pakistani Muslim. But the action takes place away from the physical geography of India and Pakistan, as is the case with many films, (though not all by any means), which stress the friendship and commonalities between the two countries. In London, Samar,[322] who is played by the ultimate Indian superhero, Shahrukh Khan, rooms with a Pakistani roommate, Zain.[323] Zain is the opposite of Samar, plump, plain-looking, down on his luck, strong Punjabi accent, and is almost "simple", a bumbling but soft and affectionate fellow, the ultimate side-kick. Typically, he calls his (Indian origin) landlord, "Uncle". He says *Allah-Hafiz* and the Indian Hindu Samar replies the same. When heartbreak makes him (SRK) leave London suddenly, he writes a letter to Zain, saying that Zain should tell his (Zain's) mother that her son is now doing better in London, and that "her other son" (Samar) has gone back to India. Such kinship terms are typical in subcontinental relationships.

[319] Viswanath and Malik, 2009
[320] ibid
[321] ibid
[322] Samar is a name that does not reveal religion or gender.
[323] Zain is played by well-known actor Sharib Hashmi

The difference between these similar characterizations in *Gadar* (2001) and *Jab tak hai jaan* (2012) is that in *Gadar*, both Muslim friends (one Indian and one Pakistani) are countered with the most evil demonic Pakistani, and the heroic Sikh. In *Jab tak hai jaan* (2012), the friend Zain is the only Pakistani in the film, and his role and depiction of this gentle side-kick with his old-fashioned values to the obligations of friendship, has an importance that the comic *Gadar* sidekicks simply lack.

As stated earlier, for this thesis, I am only considering films in which Pakistan is a factor. Films with Muslims are infinite in number, "practically every film", in which one could find sins of omission and commission - and they are not of direct relevance to this work. "Practically every movie had a sympathetic Muslim who enacted his/her Muslimness very prominently (was heavily *kajal*-ed – if male - wore a skull cap or *hijaab*, had a *taaweez*, was shown saying the *namaz*, always used Islamic invocations like *Assalaam alaikum, Inshallah, Khuda-hafiz*, (generally in a very pronounced Arabic accent)." [324] Token or not, the purpose of inclusion is not necessarily a pejorative one. Films like *Sarfarosh* (1999) addressed communal prejudices openly, gave the Muslim a voice, this was more than token, it was an assertion, if imperfect.

As opposed to this, in *Border* (1997), no Muslim is shown in the Indian army, although all other diversities are showcased. Athique speculates that this may have been because of authenticity [325], since this is based on a real battle, that particular unit may not have had any Muslims in it. I have not been able to substantiate this speculation. Nevertheless since so many details are fictionalized, this is a notable absence. The only Indian Muslim shown is a poor villager whose home is burning because of the Pakistani attack, and he has left his Quran inside the burning house. A high caste Hindu officer rescues the book, kisses it, hands it to him, with a sentence about the respect that Hinduism has for all religions, this was the **sole** purpose of introducing this character, to display the tolerance of Hinduism, exactly as discussed above by Ali Mir, although the style and genre of the film is entirely different. Whether this is to educate the Hindu public, to reassure the Muslim public, or to set a standard, this was a definite pattern. Similarly, in films where three friends are shown, one will be a Muslim, that was the raison d'etre of *Amar, Akbar, Anthony* (1977), where this was crucial to the metaphor of the story, and even the

[324] Correspondence with Ali Hussain Mir
[325] Athique, 2008, 28

composition of 3 idiots (2009), where it was immaterial to the story. But not, interestingly, in *Dil Chahta hae,* (2001), a film directed by a "Muslim" director. In 2023, Shahrukh Khan asserted the point that this was the composition of *Pathaan* (2023), not in the film, but in "real life", with himself, Deepika Padukone and John Abraham.

One simple way of Othering that is present in Indian film is the mispronouncing of names, the question is whether this Othering is intentional or not. In the film *Deewar* 2004, the common Muslim name "Jabaar" is pronounced "Jubber". In *Fanaa* 2006, the simple name "Rubeena" is "Rubaina". In *Jhootha hi sahi (*2010), the name "Umer/Omar" is pronounced "O-Maar" (like a westerner/English speaker might pronounce it, as if John Abraham had learnt how to say this name by reading it in English, and not by hearing it in India, or asking any Indian friend how this might be pronounced in the Indian way). In *Tahaan* 2010, the character Subhan Dar says "Zaafer" for "Zafar"[326], when this is the name of Bahadur Shah Zafar [327] whose name most Indians would know. The name is pronounced correctly by other actors so it's not as if there was no one on site who knew the correct pronunciation, so why is there a mispronunciation, is it intentional? What purpose does it serve? In *Baby* 2015, Akshay Kumar talks about a "Mohseen", which sounds like a mispronunciation of "Mohsin", I have been unable to find any name like Mohseen, particularly a Muslim name. In Bhuj, a Muslim woman is called Heena, whereas the Muslim name is Hinna. It is possible for a Muslim woman to be called Heena, but not likely. Certainly there must be variations in pronunciation, sometimes personal, sometimes linguistic, sometimes regional. Arab names are not pronounced in the subcontinent as they are in Arabic. But given that there are rather too many examples, this may be a space to watch. In *Asambhav* 2004, even "Al-Hamas" is not pronounced correctly, a word which is said all over the world. This applies not only to names, but also to certain Urdu words, in *Ab Tumhare Hawale Watan Saathiyo* **(**2004), the word "dehshat-gardiyon" is constantly used to mean terrorist, but terrorist is actually "dehshat-garrd", and dehshat-gardiyon would mean multiple terrorist activities. In *Tango Charlie* (2005), there is a sentence, "Every day, in different corners of the world, thousands of soldiers take each others' lives, whether it's Israel or Palestine[328], Iraq or Chechnya,

[326] Pronounced Zufferr in the subcontinent
[327] The last Mughal emperor of India, taught in every school history text
[328] Not Falasteen, every other name is in Hindi, including Bharat.

Pakistan or then Bharat, all of them have one story." The only name that is there in its anglicized version is Palestine, instead of Falasteen.

"Muslim Socials" tended to focus on reforming/modernizing retrogressive Muslim customs, or showing the older effete exotic Muslim culture, often based around the story of a cultured courtesan. (There are many films in which the same is done for retrogressive Hindu customs.)[329]And as earlier discussed, Muslim socials too have progressed beyond their genre. There are many "Others" in India, that Indian cinema has the task of "owning", the Dalits[330], the rich, the poor, women, a plethora of other ethnic groups.[331] In this study, I am only concerned with the Pakistani Other, which occasionally overlaps with some of the Others.

Like Orientalism, Othering too can be latent or manifest.[332] But to own or embrace someone, he must, at some point, be explicitly recognizable as an Other, even if the whole point is that he is not really an Other. It is not necessary to go through a process of owning/embracing someone if he is already your own, or if he is unrecognizable as different. The question doesn't arise. He must be an Other for the need to arise, whether to accept him as an Other, or to own him. It was necessary first to accept and identify him as the other. That is necessary. After having done that, you may own and embrace him. You may accept him in a positive frame, as the equal Other. Or you may accept him as the combatant Other, and designate a hostile relationship with him. If he/she was NOT the other, this story would not exist. So do stories like Coolie, Gully Boy, Secret Superstar fit the criteria in relation to the Muslim, who could be othered? This is outside the scope of this particular research.

In films about Pakistan, particularly if the Pakistani/s are not presented in a positive light, (eg *Phantom* (2015)), an Indian Muslim character is often shown to assert that the defining difference is not religion but nationality.[333] In older films such as *Sarfarosh* (1999), *Akraman* (1975), and *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata* (2002)) this was done with in-your-face speeches by Indian Muslims asserting their patriotism. *Phantom,* at first glance a brash action movie, is in fact, far more sophisticated in that it shows the

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[329] *Prem Rog* (1982) *Water* (2005), *Toilet* (2017), *Padman* (2018)
[330] *Arakshan* (2011), *Akrosh* (2010), *Article 15* (2019), and many more
[331] *Dil se* (1998), *Tubelight* (2017), *Pink* (2016), *Axone* (2019), and many more
[332] Woods, 18
[333] All these are "Muslim" names, except Siddharth Roy Kapur

discrimination/distrust faced by Muslims in India, as well as differences of political opinion amongst Pakistanis. Nor too, does it show any resolution for the dilemma of the Indian Muslim. The resolution in this film is very shockingly, death, which in itself is most telling in an "action"-patriotic film. An echo of *Henna* (1999), where the tangles in the movie are resolvable only by the death of the female protagonist, a Pakistani.

Talking to Tavishi Alagh, Mahesh Bhatt, one of Hindi cinema's well known directors, asserts, in a somewhat sentimental tone,

> "We are trying our best to call them the Other but in fact there is no dissimilarity between us. We belong to the same racial stock, we are the same people – it was just a family quarrel that turned into a blood bath of gigantic proportions…… fifty-nine years, ….you have demonized the neighbour…. Yet in spite of incessant war mongering , you have failed to create distance of the heart, the people on both sides have the yearning to drop their guard." [334]

Again, Bhatt is expressing the divide in terms of a "family quarrel."

So it is not the initial Othering that is important, but the resolution of this Othering. Does the story go beyond the othering, does it lead to an embrace? And is the embrace of a/the single Other, is the embrace in spite of the Others, as in *Gadar* **(**2001), or is it an embrace within all the Others themselves, against the establishment, as in *Rang de Basanti* **(**2006)? In *Phantom* **(**2015), the loyal Muslim within the fold of the Indian military and secret service cannot escape his Othering, no matter what he does to testify to his belongingness, his Othering is only resolved by death, a nihilist solution. In *Rang de Basanti* (2006), also considered by some to be a "nihilistic" film, it is our diverse bunch of protagonists, who are all Others, and here, even death does not resolve this Otherness. Is it a one sided willingness to embrace, as in *Gadar* (2001) or is it mutual as in *Bajrangi (*2015)? In this context, the embrace in *Main hoon na* (2004), is an deeply sophisticated one, as the fisherman/ prisoners cross the border, back to their own homes, facilitated by the Others, to embrace their Own.

[334] Alagh, "Guftagu", 2008, 192

Conclusion

In my opinion, there are three conclusions to this discussion. Firstly that in Indian cinema, in order to address the issue of Othering with regard to Pakistan, presenting the Other as such is almost always necessary. The single exception is *Jhootha hi sahi (*2007), which makes its point perfectly, without this mechanism. Secondly, there are films in which the Other is necessary/chosen to provide perspective to view the Self from. And finally that many of the themes in Indian films that deal with Pakistan, are like the anti-apartheid symbol of the self and the other, there is an intertwining. Even the films expressing hostility, unwittingly express the similarity of the self and the other, and the films that express the desire for friendship and peace recognise and have to overcome the Othering that has taken place, and that exists.

The following chapters then seek to unpick this concept in more detail in order to address the research questions at the heart of this thesis – exploring the seeming contradictions of projected hostility and projected cultural sameness and affinity. It will draw from the entire canon of Indian Hindi film about Pakistan and Pakistanis – the first such study to do so. It will problematise and analyse the assumed universal hostility through an exploration of the lens of the following tropes; firstly, the Introspective trope, where the Other is part of the story of the Self, secondly the Hostile tropes which focus on Othering, and still cannot avoid Sameness, third, the Ambiguous tropes, which could mean different things, and lastly, and more hopefully, the reconciliatory tropes that offer an Embrace.

Chapter 3 – The Introspective trope – the Other as part of the story of the Self

This chapter begins the detailed analysis of the films studied, in which what I designate as the Introspective trope and the Self is manifested, placing this trope in the different contexts in which it appears. It highlights these portrayals and shows how and they are different from those which express hostility or peace and reconciliation, or even ambiguity, which are discussed further to complete the different portrayals identified in this thesis.

I start with the introspective tropes, and the Self, and that is also where the films begin. This is a very specific genre of film where the film and the trope are closely identified. These films are not about Pakistan, at first glance it may even seem absent. But it is an integral part of the story. These stories introspect the Indian Self. The issue may be Indian Muslims, Indian soldiers, Kashmiri terrorists, Hindu extremism, secularism, abducted women, corruption. As the films discuss these internal issues, Pakistan is sometimes only present in the shadows. But present it is. And it influences the story. But it is an actor without agency. In these films, there is a tacit acceptance of Pakistan, because the Self is telling its own story as it is moving on, not getting bogged down in the tangle in which Pakistan can be blamed for all stagnation, and the Indian polity forgiven all its sins, a state of the nation that is also reflected across the border. So, these films do not present a portrayal of Pakistan which is divorced from India, the portrayal is of Pakistan as a greater or lesser part of the Indian story.

I have called this the introspective trope. Pakistan may have a hostile or positive influence, but this is not the focus or the issue, the fact is that it exists, and so the story of the self is different, it is this story that is the focus. Pakistan is presented with more neutrality than in other tropes. As with all the tropes, the films foregrounding this trope also other display tropes. Almost always, the Introspective trope makes use of Pakistan as a largely off screen presence, not simply as a catalyst to telling internal stories, but a presence which has changed the discussion of internal issues, the stories of the Self, of which Pakistan (not Indian Muslims, but Pakistan) is an innate part. *Earth 1947* (1998) is the only variation on the presence of Pakistan, where the Self is not just India, but the subcontinent, or humanity. So while Pakistan is identified as an Other, it is not an outside

Other. It is an Other that is part of the Self's story. It is not a mirror image, but a mirror through which the Self looks at itself and finds itself changed.

This chapter explores this overarching portrayal, through the different areas of introspection of the Self. It analyses how this 'othering' is intimately bound up with an understanding of self. The chapter is structured around the most common themes through which this introspection is seen:

1 Discussing the India polity, the Other within the Self
2 Muslims in India
3 Partition
4 War Films
5 Scapegoating

Whereas literature started recording Partition immediately, "Manto, Intezar, Chaman Nahal, but from …. cinema, there was little or nothing forthcoming. …. people either too ashamed or too traumatized to speak of their experiences, this silence was understandable. Giving cinematic voice to this hurtful subject…."[335]. Hindi cinema had an escapist element in any case, which in later years became more pronounced. Although references to "the (Indian) nation" were plentiful and of great importance, "references to Pakistan were conspicuous by their absence". This "resonant silence" [336] "is extremely vocal and evocative".[337]

This did not necessarily mean that there was a complete vacuum. In fact, the very imagining of the modern secular India, the India of national unity, even before Partition, implied a regular and active critique of the communalist nature of the absent unnamed breakaway, Pakistan. Common metaphors are seen in films that may not have mentioned Pakistan even once but were based on the stories of a mother and two brothers, as many were *(Mother India* **(**1957), *Upkar* **(**1967)*, Deevar* **(**1975), *Waqt* **(**1965) had 3 brothers, etc) where often the prodigal son/brother would come back to the family fold, illustrated the attitude towards Pakistan. In an iconic song from *Dhool Ka Phool* (1959) (Flower of Dust, a film about the adoption of an nameless unknown child, whose "birth religion"

[335] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, ix
[336] Sarkar, 2009, 45
[337] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, x

cannot be identified), Sahir Ludhianvi [338] writes of the artificially created manmade divisions of religion in a way that does not simply interrogate the legitimacy of Partition, but condemns such an ideology,[339] and this was the pattern. The story is not at all about Pakistan, but a human story in which the commitment to a secular ideology is paramount, and this in itself is not simply a comment on Pakistan, but an attack on its very rationale. The foster father sings to the child;

> You will be
> Neither Hindu nor Muslim.
> Born of Man [340] (Humankind)
> You will be a Man. (Human).
>
> It is well that you are nameless.
> You have nothing to do with any religion.
> You cannot be accused of Knowledge
> that divides (partitions) humankind
>
> You will be
> the face of the new world.
>
> The Lord made Man (Human)
> We made him Hindu or Muslim
> The Lord made this Earth
> We made it India or Iran
>
> The faith that teaches hatred is not yours
> The boot that crushes humanity is not yours
> Yours is not the temple in which there is no Quran,
> Yours is not the sacred mosque in which there is no Gita.
>
> You are Desire
> for Peace and Friendship and Reconciliation
>
> Those who trade their faith
> Loot their homeland
>
> You will be
> Their death knell. [341]

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[338] Famous poet and lyricist, born Muslim, lifelong Communist, he fled Pakistan in 1949, and achieved much fame and respect in India
[339] Khdair, 2018, 8
[340] *Insaan* is a gender-neutral word which literally translates as Human, but connotes Man/Mankind
[341] It is not possible for me to translate the uncompromising beauty of Sahir Ludhianvi's poetry, so I have given a literal translation.

Such films were not Pakistan-focused, but the secular versus two-nation debate seemed to permeate every aspect of life.[342] India needed to, and did, vaunt secularism as its political and social ideology and philosophy and its very way of life, at every possible opportunity. The fissures and cracks and open breaks along religious lines which were used and promoted by the imperial government to divide and rule, and which had resulted in a bloody partition at Independence, made this necessary in the new state. Before partition, Muslims were almost 25% of the Indian population.[343] After Partition, Pakistan (East and West) had the Muslim majority areas of the Indian subcontinent, but India still had a large percentage of Muslims as part of its population, (10 per cent)[344] and it was urgent that this population not only felt safe in India, but had a commitment to the new state, and were accepted as an integral part of India, both by themselves and by the majority population.

As socially committed cinema, Indian films took this on as a self-imposed responsibility. It would not be an exaggeration to say that almost every film found an opportunity to underscore this philosophy in some way or other, by allegory, by mythology, by modern stories. This process had started before partition, in order to counteract divisive tendencies, and it continued in a seamless way after Partition, sometimes clumsily, sometimes simply as a token, sometimes with sincerity. This was essentially about Indian Muslims, and the convoluted issue and the later reality of Pakistan was avoided.

The many ways that Indians audiences felt about Pakistan were too myriad to be acceptable to each other, and therefore too risky commercially to portray. There was a gamut of political opinions, ranging from those who considered the creation of Pakistan and the consequent partition to be the slaughter of sacred Akhand Bharat (Indivisible India), to those who accepted it with sorrow, to those who accepted it with sorrow AND guilt, to those viewed it as an errant younger brother who would eventually realize the error of his ways and return abashed to the family fold, to others who considered it as a danger to the Muslims who remained in India, to yet others who accepted the existence of the two new countries, to others who celebrated Partition, and probably many more besides. There would not have been many who celebrated it in the Bombay film industry,

[342] Yaadon ki baaraat (1973), Amar, Akbar, Anthony (1977)
[343] Graff and Galonnier, 2013, Introduction, Census of India 1941
[344] ibid

if any at all. But it was a reality, *Garam Hava* (1974) is one clear such depiction. The volatile relationship between the two countries made any equable depiction problematic too. How to portray this complicated and continually-changing, increasingly hostile relationship, in which each side blamed the other for complicated transgressions? This complexity created the silence.

Many Pakistanis are unaware or unwilling to accept, firstly, that many Indian Muslims may strongly hold a different point of view about the creation of Pakistan, and secondly, about how Pakistan has impacted all Indian Muslims, but most specially those who were ideologically secular or nationalist. This issue persists till today in India, with Muslims being suspect in their loyalties, and critics of any Indian government being told to "go to Pakistan". Whether this was the cause for Pakistan, or the effect of Pakistan will be argued forever, but it exists. Ishtiaq Ahmed strongly argues that a solution to the problems of the Muslims of India (Pakistan) could not be a solution when it ignored or "ditched" one third of the Muslim population who lived in Muslim-minority-provinces.[345] Those who fled violence in these minority areas and came to Pakistan as refugees from India, became known as "Muhajirs" (refugees), and remained controversial for decades. Now with the Pakistani-born population being almost 80 years old, this issue may not be considered so live.[346] But the issue of Kashmir is ever volatile.

The first answer to making films featuring Partition or Pakistan was Just Don't Do It. By government diktat, the word "Pakistan" was hardly mentioned in Hindi cinema for more than 10 years. "…… though these references (to modern nation-building) were abundant, references to Pakistan were conspicuous by their absence.[347] There was a law specifying that no enemy country was to be named. [348] "It is in this nebulous beginning, that is yet extremely vocal and evocative in its silence, that….. the trajectory of this relationship through celluloid representation affords an insight valuable and crucial to the understanding of the evolving identities of the two nations."[349]

Saibal Chatterjee writes,

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[345] Ahmed, 2020, 393, 420
[346] "Muhajir" refers to Urdu-speaking immigrants/refugees, who constitute almost an ethnolinguistic group in Sindhi power politics, and in access (or lack of) to resources, services and employment.
[347] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, x
[348] ibid
[349] ibid

> "Until well into the 1990s, one important film censorship guideline barred the mention of the "enemy nation". Once that long-standing restriction was lifted - again, it wasn't just a stray administrative decision but a cold, calculated political chessboard move - *Gadar* (2001) struck. And now, there is no stopping the you-have-to-hate-Pakistan-if-you-love-India juggernaut". [350]

Discussing the Indian polity, the Other within ourselves

To clarify, this Other within Ourselves is Pakistan within the Idea of India. It is not the Indian Muslim within the nation state of India. During the early years, Indian film was largely silent on Pakistan. In the first 20 years after Partition/Independence, only three major films were made about the subject, two of which were contemporary in their subject, *Lahore* 1949, almost immediately after Partition, and *Chhalia* 1960, more than 10 years later, and in 1961, *Dharmputra*.

I cite these 3 films together, though they are more than 10 years apart. The angle, perspective and story of each film is different, but each film is self-critical and introspective, unabashedly modern and progressive, secular, and without animosity towards Pakistan, attempting to make sense of what has happened. Two of these films, *Lahore* and *Chhalia*, are about abducted women, and the idea of honour, the third is more directly political. These films deserve to be discussed at some length, in 20 years, these were the only three films dealing directly with Pakistan, offering a critique of Indian society; at the very same time combatting the animosity towards Pakistan in thoughtful ways. It is the bonds that are paramount in these three films, the embrace that is evident, love, longing and tragedy, there is an acceptance of the new reality of the Other's existence, even if disagreeing with its rationale. There is a weaving in and out of a determined Sameness, a kinship, a contrast between such films and what came later. Later introspective films, *Garam Hava*, *Mammo*, *Mulk*, *Fiza*, discuss the effects of the creation of Pakistan on the Indian polity, the sameness is unwitting or unwilling, but there is a lack of any expression of affection, but despite that Pakistan, even as the unloved Other, is an integral part of the Self's story.

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[350] Chatterjee, Saibal, 2003

Lahore 1949, within months of Partition, and *Chhalia* (1960) more than 10 years after Partition, both focus on the issue of abducted women. Nehru had been asked to highlight this issue [351] by social workers, getting abducted women back as well as exhorting their families to accept them. But many lived out their lives in ashrams and refugee centres once they were repatriated. [352]

Lahore (1949) starred Karan Dewan and Nargis, superstars of their time. Daiya says, "*Lahore*, despite its success at the time, and its unique place as one of the few, rare, commercial films centred upon Partition, and on abducted women, has been largely forgotten…. Few scholars of Indian cinema speak of its existence….." [353]

We are lucky that Daiyya has unearthed and written extensively on the film, of which she seems to have seen a full version. [354] A review from *Sound* [355] mentions a "noble Muslim" as a counterpart to the "chivalrous Indian youth", there is no "noble Muslim" in the publicly available version of the film. Released in 1949, so presumably made in 1948, it is "based on a true story", "and newspaper reports" [356], and was banned in Pakistan. [357] It begins with poetry evoking a longing to embrace Lahore, and nostalgically portrays the pleasant life in Lahore before partition, shows Partition, and the ensuing chaos. Radha is a pregnant Hindu girl, now in India, raped presumably by Muslims during Partition. Rejected and taunted by her once-adoring ex-fiancee, Ramesh, she replies:

> This is not my sin. It is the sin of *some brother of yours* [358], which has been dumped on to me. *He was indeed some brother of yours!*[359] who had no mercy in his heart, no shame in his eyes, who did not listen to the pleading of a helpless woman*, this is your blood, this is indeed* pieces of your body! [360]

This is the exact opposite of Othering, and this is the straight-talking style that the writer/director carries throughout. While the gender role is traditional and subservient,

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[351] Sriram, 2021
[352] Qidwai, 1974
[353] Rajadhyaksha and Willemen, 1994
[354] The publicly accessible print is extremely poor quality, portions are chronologically incorrectly joined, scenes are missing
[355] Daiya 2008, 91
[356] Daiya, 2008, 92, 93
[357] Daiya 2008, 91
[358] Italics mine
[359] Italics mine
[360] Italics mine

the writer/director, through the clear words of this woman, establishes that the perpetrators of violence were no "Others". They were not only from *amongst* ourselves, but they *were* ourselves, "they" and "we" are the same. The "Otherness" that it establishes is between good and evil, the fact that some were Muslim and some were Hindu was incidental. The word "brother" is used, in an unusual context, not to talk about the brotherhood of humanity, but the brotherhood of evil and inhumanity, within all and each of us. The perpetrators of violence are also brothers, of each other and of ourselves, for like Ramesh, it is too easy to slip from one to the other. Therefore the brotherhood of the righteous must not stay silent.

Chaman visits his friend Ramesh, and sees Salma, a refugee woman, whom is Ramesh's "keep." Chaman is incensed.

Chaman	… A blight has fallen onto your senses! ….. As this poor helpless creature is dependent on your whims, just think how many of our mothers and sisters will be in the same position *with others like you* [361] on the *other side* [362]! Open your eyes! Don't you see *your* [363] mother, *your* [364] sister in the shape of this girl? … (He says to Salma) *Behen*, I will take you to Lahore tomorrow. Be ready ……
Salma	*Bhaijaan*, (Beloved brother) what can I give you but my prayers. May the scorching winds of these times never touch you.

In this dialogue there is a reiterated "owning", a reiterated embrace, through the use of words signifying kinship for those who are allegedly "Others".

At Lahore, Chaman says to the officer on duty, "I have come to hand over your *amanat (sacred trust)*. This is a young girl from Amritsar." The (presumably now Pakistani) officer says, "*Kaash* (If only) all the young men of the country (*no distinction, no plurals, there is* no "your" country, "my" country, there is no othering here) were like you." There is a total absence of Othering. Chaman has come to Lahore to look for his fiancée, who

[361] Italics mine
[362] Italics mine
[363] Italics mine
[364] Italics mine

is the "keep" of someone in Lahore and brings her back, against all advice, even the fiancée's. Each word in this script is carefully chosen.

It was 10 years before the next film that mentions Pakistan, *Challia* (The Fraud**,** 1960), and it was also about abducted women; it is clear that the problems remained. "(Raj) Kapoor and his team seem to have been largely behind the project, with a strong theme of communal harmony within an overarchingly Hindu India…."[365] It "is one of only a handful of films prior to the late 1990s that deal, even obliquely, with the subject of Partition —… In the late 1940s, both the Indian and Pakistani governments launched "Recovery Operations" …. aimed at reuniting such women with their families — to find that, in many cases (*as in this film*), the families wanted nothing further to do with their "dis-honoured" women. [366] The film "opens with a speeding train — Indian cinema's trope of modernity, but also its reminder of links to lost homelands, and of other trains bearing the refugees and victims of 1947."[367] Trains became one of the symbols of Partition, of the terror and the tragedy. 5 years after partition, a group of Sikh and Hindu "abductees" are being repatriated to India. Shanti is full of nostalgia for a time when "one's own countrymen had not yet become strangers. …. When Man had not yet become a beast. And Lahore….. Lahore was the Lahore that we knew."

In Delhi, Shanti's father tells her father-in-law, that Shanti was a member of her in-laws family. It was up to them, whether they accepted her or condemned her. The father breaks down, he has "Othered" his daughter, but his son affirms that it cannot be his sister who is alive. They Other Shanti to death; she has been defiled by the Other. In the camp, Shanti waits impatiently, expecting to be owned and embraced. They come, despite themselves, to see her one last time. Her brother accuses her of dishonouring them, saying suicide would be preferable. She is denied their embrace, and devastated. But her husband, Keval, arrives and embraces her, she is grateful, and delighted to give him the surprise "gift" of their five year son. Keval embraces the child but is perplexed when the child says his name is "Anwar", the name of a "Muslim", an "Other". He glares suspiciously at his wife, and when the child says his father is "Khan Abdul Rahman", Shanti explains that Abdur Rahman had been her saviour. When she was on the run, a

[365] Lutgendorf, University of Iowa (no date)
[366] ibid, For other explorations of this theme, *Pinjar* (2003) and *Khamosh Pani.* (2003)
[367] ibid

hand had grabbed her and pulled her inside, a voice denied her existence to the mob that banged on the door. The man said to her, "Sister, wear your veil." She veiled herself with gratitude. The Khan "owned" her, by calling her "sister", saying; "…. I will never raise my eyes to look upon your face. I am not a very good man, but I had a sister, Sakina, she is in India. If I help you, maybe God will find some place in the heart of some Hindu or Sikh who will save my sister." The mirror imaging and sameness is evident. Shanti says, "In these dark times, if God ever takes human form, it will be the form of Abdul Rahman. Because of him I have been able to …. bring your *amanat* (sacred trust) to you. He never knew me except by my feet and voice. He is my brother." She is embracing this Other, through kinship terms, and by deifying him in the image of her own gods, it is her own husband who refuses to believe her, and leaves. Anwar consoles her, and urges her to say the prayer that "*Abba*" [368] taught him, "*Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim."*[369] Anwar is referring to the Muslim Pakistani Other as his father/kin, and owning the prayer of this Other.

Enter Chhalia, also in Delhi. Chhalia is a charlatan, defining himself ;

> "… A saint does not bother about religion or caste, high-born or low-born, Hindu-Muslim, foreigner-local, colour, race. I do not know my religion or my caste, or even if I am Hindu, Muslim or Christian! Am I not a real saint?!"

For Chhalia, there are no Others. This eponymous character is acted by the star, Raj Kapoor, also director of the film, he is the most crucial person in the film. When everyone is defining themselves in terms of religion, and creating Others by their definition of themselves, Chhalia is the "saint", who without sanctimoniousness, treats everyone as equals. His very existence, like Anwar's, is a challenge to these definitions of Self and Othering. He sees Shanti, who has lost her child in the chaos, and has no one, and says "I am not a very good man, ….but I will not take any advantage of your helplessness. …." , mirror imaging what Khan did on the other side of the border. Again, Shanti is given shelter by an unknown man. Anwar is separated from his mother by chaos, and ends up in an orphanage where Keval teaches, Keval recognizes him and is drawn to him. One day Anwar is in tears, missing his mother. Keval offers to be his "father", saying he would

[368] "Abba" is used for "Daddy", generally amongst Muslims
[369] In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

like to call Anwar, "Gaur".[370] Anwar refuses, saying he likes "Anwar" because his mother and father called him by this name. The kinship evokes connections that override the Othering implied by the religious identity of the name.

Then Khan comes to Delhi. He has evil designs on "Challia's woman" to pay Challia back for past history. Shanti sees him and shouts "*Bhaiyya*!" (dear brother). He looks at her amazed; he has never seen her face, then his eyes fall on her feet, and he recognizes her. This one word, changes him from Other to kin. He goes towards her, calling her "Sister". Shanti asks him if he has had any news of his sister, Sakina. He is dazed at the idea that he had evil intentions to this sister, Shanti, and is convinced that Sakina must also have "had some evil brother like me ….", sameness weaving in and out of his thoughts and words to confound the Othering.

Later everyone is reconciled, Khan too finds Sakina, who had been protected by a Sikh as his "daughter," and goes "home" to Pakistan, which is "where Hindustan is not." These lines "offer one of the film's most touching moments, suggesting the bewilderment at the lunacy of man-made boundaries, like the insane hero of Manto's famous short story "Toba Tek Singh." [371]

The film evokes this madness and surrealism throughout. Lahore had been their home, but Lahore was Pakistan now. They were strangers in their own home, and Man had become a beast. Khan is the epitome of the noble Pakistani, changed sometimes into a beast as he confronts the horrors of violence and loss, saved by his sense of honour. Keval is the epitome of the good civilized Hindu, turned into a beast by the horrors of organized religion and social morality, saved by Chhalia, the misfit, the modern day Sufi. It is Anwar, the Hindu child who insists that he is Anwar, insists that Khan, the Other, is his father, insists that his mother recite the words of comfort and Quranic prayer that this Other has taught him, who is the future, who cannot separate from his own past, which is also the past of the Other, who is part of oneself. The weaving in and out of who is the Other and who is Oneself (kin) is not concluded with the departure of Khan who has also found what he had lost. Because the future is - Anwar.

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[370] Gaur is a name of Sanskrit origin.
[371] Lutgendorf, University of Iowa, (no date)

Chhalia is an allegory based on stereotypes, and on a strongly patriarchal ideology. Shanti is clearly NOT "dishonoured", her liaisons with the two men who protect her are pure and so she deserves acceptance by her husband and family. Very different from the far more radical *Lahore*, which insisted that the girls who have been raped and are pregnant, also deserve nothing less than being considered pure and being accepted.

After *Chhalia* **(**1960), *Dharmputra* (1961) followed, with Anwar and Dharmputra epitomising the seamlessness of the Other within Oneself. It is a prequel in terms of its era, which leads up to and ends at Partition. Director Yash Chopra was a refugee from Pakistan, *Dharmputra* was his second film, directly dealing with secularism and politics. He saw it as a labour of love and introspection and a plea for sanity, progress [372] and peace. His earlier film, *Dhool ke phool*, a secular, anti-religious-superstition film, had been a hit. A Muslim adopts an illegitimate child of a Hindu couple. It is less about secularism than simply humanism, and about caste, superstition, prejudice, bigotry and injustice against an illegitimate child. In *Dharamputra*, a "Muslim" child is adopted by a Hindu couple, religion is prominent in the story, but the point of the story is to demonstrate its irrelevance. The characters in the film are more personification and symbols of ideas than human characters, as was/is often the style and technique of Indian cinema. Allowing detailed discussion and debate, Acharya Sen's script is powerful and uncompromising. The film is about a secular and inclusive India, and that is the context in which Pakistan enters the film. The word Pakistan is not much used, but the discussion of the idea and its challenge to the idea of a secular India forms the basis for the film, expressed and challenged through its mirror image, "Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan" as espoused by Hindu "fundamentalists".

Ira Bhaskar, as quoted by Vishwanath and Malik, holds that Yash Chopra's *Dharamputra* 1961 addressed the communal crisis, and looked at the other side of the picture - the role of Hindu fundamentalists in partition. [373] This film stands apart, first, for its uncompromising articulation that even with the existence of Pakistan, quintessentially we are one people, for the embrace and kinship that is woven through the whole story.

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[372] In the sense of moving on

[373] Viswanath and Malik, 2009 (citing Bhaskar, Ira. "Popular Films and Reconciliation", WISCOMP symposium on Reconciliation in South Asia: New Delhi, 2005. Reported in Tonusree Basu and Stuti Bhatnagar, "Formulating Discourses: The Media and India Pakistan Relations", WISCOMP CT Working Paper X, 2007, p 36.)

Second, for the vigour and detail with which any Hindutva propaganda is dealt with. Neither the good doctor nor his wife are willing to listen to any nonsense about culture and tradition that is not rooted in rationalism and fact. As uncompromising as the film is with the young Dilip's fuzzy idea of a Hindu culture, it nevertheless, with sadness, compromises with its equally fuzzy mirror image, the desire for Pakistan, although no Pakistani is shown. While not accepting the soundness of the idea, it also apportions the guilt of creating this reaction. The film is fascinating for how it weaves in and out of kinship. Interestingly, sisterhood in this film is as important as brotherhood. The plot climaxes at and because of Partition. It shows the changing/unchanging relationships of Hindus and Muslims within India, in the context of the idea and the reality of Pakistan.

Dharmputra starts in 1925 and takes us up to 1947. Hindu Gulshan Rai and Muslim Nawab Badruddin, both widowers, are best friends and neighbours. Gulshan has a son, Amrit, and the Nawab has a daughter, Bano. Amrit and Bano are not simply "like" brother and sister, Amrit is Bano's *raakhee*[374]*Bhaijaan*, (beloved elder brother), a kinship by choice. When Gulshan dies, the Nawab sees Amrit through his medical studies. Amrit marries Savitri. Bano falls in love with her penniless tutor, Javed, who proposes marriage, but the Nawab throws him out, considering him a fortune hunter. Bano discovers she is pregnant, but Javed has left town and cannot be found. Nawab Sahib goes for help to Amrit (now Dr. Rai). Amrit talks directly to Bano and asks her who has deceived her. She replies, "I am an educated woman. Who could deceive me? No one. We were in love." (Portraying a very radical woman circa 1940). Amrit and Savitri, recently married, have no children yet, they adopt the child, extending another kinship embrace across the religious divide. The old Nawab gives the child the (Hindu) name of Dilip and half his property, his way of owning this child is for the child to own his property. Bano longs for her child; the affection between her and Savitri helps her to accept the situation. Chance brings Javed back into their lives, the Nawab gives permission for Bano and Javed to marry; he moves in with them, bonds with Amrit, Savitri and Dilip, who is the only child between the two couples. This major part of the film is dedicated to showing not simply communal harmony, but an intertwined bonding impossible to unravel, and the main

[374] A "rakhee" is a thread tied by a female on the wrist of a male. It proclaims that the relationship between the two is that of brother and sister, and this is taken seriously. A woman with no brothers may ask for male protection in this way, it is the brother's duty to play this role. Although a Hindu custom, it is also used across the religious divide to establish relationships that are almost "legal" in their bonds, and has been used politically to overcome religious difference.

character displaying this is the Muslim Nawab. Then a miscarriage leaves Bano unable to have children; while Savitri is delivered of twins. Dilip, a toddler, walks in and out of both homes freely.

The film shows both the social and moral code are common to the two main religions shown in the film, Hinduism and Islam; allowing a certain space for the women who break this code. In a later scene, Amrit contemptuously attacks Dilip's understanding of what culture means, telling him that culture is not recipes and rituals, it is about uplifting the human soul, about goodness and beauty. In this film, the visible difference in clothing and customs are negligible in the face of common values and a social and moral code.

The Nawab joins the Independence struggle and is shot by British forces, at a rally. His last words are "Hindu-Muslim *bhai bhai*" ("Hindu-Muslim brotherhood!"), a slogans of India's freedom movement, more evidence of commitment to India and communal harmony from Muslims. After this shocking event, Javed and Bano go abroad for many years. When they return, India is much changed. Pakistan and Partition are imminent, are talked about in every conversation, fought about on every street corner. Dilip, played by Shashi Kapoor, is eighteen. To the bemusement of his whole family, including his younger siblings, he is a Hindu extremist, and they all often tease him and argue with him, showing this strain of thought as an aberration not taken seriously. Hardly remembering Bano and Javed, he dutifully touches Bano's feet when told to do so by Savitri, and calls her Masi (mother's sister), but he is cold. When the family bemoans his extremism, Javed and Bano dismiss it as teenage angst, although his venom is directed against Muslims. By twenty-two though, Dilip is a popular and serious student leader. He and his political companions find the idea of Partition blasphemous, believing in a sacred *Akhand Bharat* (Greater/United India). "Bharat belongs to the Hindus. If the Muslims do not want to live with us, let them go, go anywhere. And if they do not go themselves, we will make them go!"

His younger brother, Chunnu, claps and says, "Wonderful! A new dictator is born!"

The other brother, Munnu, says seriously, "*Bhaiyya*, honestly you are completely wrong. India belongs to all those who wish to belong to India. The question is not about Partition, it is about Independence. If we wish to get rid of the English, we have to first resolve our internal disputes."

Dilip	And you'll do this by partitioning this land?
Munnu	…. If this gets rid of our enemies the British, yes, we certainly will! At least we will no longer be slaves.
Dilip:	It is people like you, with your warped logic, that have gone on pandering to the Muslims! …. If people like you didn't encourage them, if you hadn't been there, the Muslims would never dare to confront us!
Chunnu:	Yes, and if you had not been there, the Muslims would not be asking for a separate country! The idea of Pakistan came into the Muslim mind because of Hindus like you! You treated the Muslims like untouchables. You never accepted them!
Dilip:	Too right, we didn't accept them! They have always worked against the Hindu faith spreading Islam on the strength of the sword!
Chunnu	That is complete nonsense! That is English propaganda and part of their divide and rule policy!"
Munnu	(the calmer one) And it doesn't make any sense, Bhaijan. The Muslims ruled in India for hundreds of years. If they had spread Islam by the sword, there would not be a single Hindu left in India.
Dilip	(in a rage) You do not know history!

Such detailed discussion is untypical in Indian cinema, where it happens [375] (seldom), it is unusual. Such matters are usually dealt with by practical examples, or platitudes, cliches, and exhortation. Between the four adults, Amrit talks of India's new reality, with utter contempt for both sides, one chanting "Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan" and the other "*Le ke rahen ge Pakistan*." (We will not rest till we get Pakistan). A political leader gives a speech, " …. countries and borders are not made by God, they have been created by man. So, if yesterday we did not object to this system of giving different bits of land different names, why do we object now? If some Muslims who used to love the whole of India, today wish to love only a particular part, then let them do so, if they love one part of India more than another, let them. If they wish to live separate from us, let them. Perhaps this is what is demanded by these changing times. Perhaps history has been manipulated. But if they wish to partition the country into two, then let it be partitioned!" Partition is announced. We see the violence across India. Javed rushes home, calling out in anguish,

[375] Swades 2004

"Today Hindustan has died!" Meanwhile, Dilip, angered by the flood of refugees and massacres, swears vengeance. These discussions are explicit, and do not need a deep analysis, they clearly argue and state their position.

A mob attacks Javed, the doctor and twins rescue him and take him home. The mob demands Javed, and Dilip insists his father remove him, calling Javed "an enemy to my culture." Amrit, furious, tells him that the killing and chaos in the name of religion is because of people like Dilip, and threatens to shoot him, Bano intervenes to shield Dilip, who is bewildered to be told she is his real mother. The scene cuts to a song showing bloody and weary scenes of migration and partition, to the words “Those rivers of blood that we could not make our own, ask us today, whose blood is this? …. Who are these patriots that turn living homes to ashes?....” Surrounded by all the family, Dilip tells them, "I preached this religion of hate,”; and rushes into the mob exhorting them to kill him. Nearly lynched, he is finally saved. In the finale, he vows to live by the ideology of Humanity.

In the story, the characters serve less as people and more as representations of ideas, emphasizing that any idea rooted in flawed beliefs cannot itself be true.

Chopra/Sen unequivocally lay the blame for India’s partition, at Britain’s door. Equally forthrightly, Amrit says to his (adopted) son, “It is (extremist) Hindus like you who have created Pakistan.” Dilip’s younger brother says exactly the same, so at least twice in the film, this idea is repeated. A political leader addresses the people, “Partition (batvara – division/division of the spoils) also takes place between brothers. But ties of blood cannot be cut even by a sword.” In the eyes of this film, partition is painful, even wrong, it sprang from hatred, but the two who have been parted are brothers, are kin, and belong to each other, what binds them is indestructible, and love will prevail between the two, because there is no place for hatred and narrow nationalism in a sane world. The film believes that despite the madness of the times, there will be a sane world.

Dharmputra was such a flop that Yash Chopra, one of the most successful directors of all time, did not return to this theme till 2004, more than 40 years later. But return he did, with *Veer-Zara* 2004 which became the blockbuster hit of the time.

These were the three notable films in the first 20 years. They are forgotten films now, notable for the interwoven kinships between the Self and the Other. Lahore had Pakistani characters, mostly shadowy, neither vilified, nor owned. If they were shown in a critical

light, as was the man who forcibly "kept" Chaman's fiancée, an equal villain, Ramesh, was shown in India. *Chhalia* had Khan, a noble Pakistani character. *Dharmputra* has no Pakistani character. The separation was recent and these films dealt with adjusting to this new reality introspectively. As part of this process, the next major issue for introspection in the Indian social fabric, vis a vis Pakistan, was most naturally the situation of the Muslims of India.

The Muslims of India

In these early years, there was also such a determination to strike the right positive upbeat note regarding Indian Muslims, that no negativity could be allowed to surface. Into this bland positivity *Garam Hawa (Scorching Winds),* "the best-ever film of Partition",[376] struck a blow for reality. Released in 1974, it was a simple black and white film, made on a shoe-string budget, with a committed and iconic cast and crew. The film faced opposition from its inception, paradoxically it was also funded by the government's National Film Finance Cooperation. Communal groups disrupted filming, it was stuck with the Censor Board for 11 months;[377] to voice the plight of the Muslims, was considered a threat to communal harmony. It took Mrs. Gandhi, to take a personal push through its release.[378] It went on to win an award for national integration.[379] Shiv Sena in Mumbai threatened to burn down any theatre that screened this "anti-Hindu film".[380] An emergency showing was held the very afternoon of the premiere (which was in the evening) for Bal Thackery,[381] after seeing the film, he allowed it to go ahead. *Garam Hava* is remembered amongst a handful of films that started a new wave in Indian cinema, and for its sensitive handling of serious and controversial issues.[382] It directly and frankly dealt with the situation of Indian Muslims after Partition. Acted in by giants such as Balraj Sahni (his last film), Shauqat Azmi, Farooq Shaikh, it is based on an unpublished story by the iconic Urdu writer, Ismat Chughtai. Kaifi Azmi, famous poet and husband of Shaukat Azmi, wrote the screenplay with Shama Zaidi, wife of M. S Sathyu, the director.

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[376] Bhatia, 2020
[377] ibid
[378] Mukherjee and Mandal, Filmkopath, 2022
[379] Chandrasekhar, 2011
[380] Shiv Sena is a right-wing Marathi Hindutva political party
[381] Bal Thackeray was head of the Shiv Sena
[382] Siddiqui, 2020

The important people in this film belonged to IPTA, including Muslims, who would have been opposed to the creation of Pakistan. Balraj Sahni himself had fled come as a refugee to India from his home in Pakistan. Yet they publicly recorded their protest at the situation of the Muslims of India. Other than the ideological debate, which remains unresolved, despite the clear commitment of the film makers, the film is not anti-Pakistan, except obliquely; Pakistanis may find justification for the creation of Pakistan, in the discrimination it shows; others see how the creation of Pakistan negatively affected the lives of the Muslims left behind, (for all of whom there could never have been enough place and space in the Pakistan that was imagined nor that actually came into being), Pakistan provided an additional excuse for discrimination.

> The country was divided
> And the heart shattered into a thousand pieces
> ….
> Over there as well as here
> In every home there were pyres burning
> ….
> In every town there were cremation grounds
> ….
> Who heard the Gita
> Or the Quran
> Faith itself was aghast

The film portrays the dilemmas and disintegration of a Muslim family at the time of Partition and its aftermath. Pakistan is off screen, but a major actor. The influence of this actor on the Muslims left behind in India is malign. For the ones who leave and get to Pakistan, it may appear to be the opposite; even this is superficial. For Indian Muslims, India itself also becomes actively malign. The only Pakistanis in the film are the Indians who leave and go to Pakistan; when they come back to visit, they are alien, touched by a shallow prosperity and estranged forever. They have less commitment to their family, even less to their new country, and are occupied with position, status and money, all of which they have more of, in contrast to their depleted Indian relations.

Halim, the eldest Mirza brother and an active Muslim Leaguer, quietly leaves for Pakistan with his immediate family, convinced that he will face a bleak future in India. His mother, deeply attached to their ancestral home, refuses to leave. Saleem, the younger brother, hopeful for better times, remains to care for his mother and his business. But their *haveli*, registered in Halim's name, is declared Evacuee property, forcing them to vacate their

home for which they had stayed. Landlords are reluctant to rent to Muslims, ostensibly because "Muslims may run away to Pakistan without paying the rent." They find a small, shabby house in a poor locality. Saleem's business is destroyed in communal violence, and no banks want to lend money to Muslims "who may run away to Pakistan." Saleem's daughter Amina, engaged to Halim's son Kazim, faces uncertainty.

Ajmani, a Hindu, purchases the *haveli* from the Evacuee Trust, and later suggests Saleem's mother return there, to give her comfort in her final days. She is able to die in "her" haveli due to his kindness. Saleem's younger son Sikander graduates but faces serious discrimination in getting employment, well-wishers and ill-wishers alike, advise him to try his luck in Pakistan. He gets drawn to agitational politics, protesting against discrimination and unemployment, and feels that Muslims should make common cause in national politics with other underprivileged sections. Baqar, the elder son, stifled by his father's old fashioned methods in the declining family business, and depressed by growing communalism, also leaves for Pakistan, another terrible blow. Baqar is a template for millions of Indian Muslims for whom Pakistan became an option of escape, for personal and family reasons, rather than for political and ideological reasons.

Suddenly Kazim reappears. His father wanted him to marry well in Pakistan, but he has run away to marry Amina. They are touched by an unexpected happiness, but the wedding is a few days away when the Indian authorities summarily deport Kazim, due to new registration requirements. New legislation that was appearing overnight, of which people were totally unaware. Amina, devastated, ultimately accepts Shamshad's proposal. Then Saleem is arrested for espionage, and despite being eventually cleared, a whispering campaign follows him. This cuts him deeply, and when Amina commits suicide, his spirit is broken, and he decides to move to Pakistan despite Sikander's plea to stay and commit themselves to India. As this depleted family is going to the station, with no one to see them off, they are surrounded by a procession protesting unemployment. Moved, Sikander and Saleem join the demonstration, as Saleem's wife returns to their rented house, abandoning their journey to Pakistan, choosing resilience over departure.

This film is not looking outwards towards peace-making or friendship between India and Pakistan, it is a voice of assertion and peace for Muslims within India, for the fabric of India, actually critical of India to the ultimate end of creating a "better" India. The Sameness is a priori, kinship. Implicit in the film is that Pakistan perforce became a part

of the lives of Indian Muslims, (and therefore of India), always there (specially in the early days) as an option even for those who may have been ideologically opposed to it. Sameness is taken for granted, and while there is a growing distance, at the very same time, it is a time when every Indian Muslim is a potential Pakistani. The Self can easily be the Other and vice versa, despite the choice made in the end. In *Upkar* (1967), this disruption is named as an unspoken greed, an unnamed Pakistan, which is dispelled by the brothers' embrace, all in an allegorical presentation. In *Garam Hava***,** there is much more teasing out of the complexity of this alienation, but a recognition that they will live with this.

20 years later, in 1994, a gentler, charming *Mammo* followed. *Mammo* "redefines the notion of home, a small gem of a film, still remembered.[383] For Mammo, her home is where her sister is, but she is not allowed to stay. The film questions the 'notion of nationality.' [384] Jimmy Cage writes, "Mammo is a fantastic, life-affirming film that tells the tragedy of the partition of India in a poignant and tangible way."[385] The introspective films do not foreground Sameness with Pakistan, it exists unstated, sometimes with disruption. *Mammo* resists the whole post-colonial concept of the nation. In a very simple way, it challenges some of the most entrenched mega-concepts, the nation, the state, citizenship, juxtaposing them against home and family. Pakistan is shorthand for events that have taken place. As a word, it is much mentioned, but has no agency, no role, no character, it is "the other" place. It is used to turn the focus on India, not to draw attention to itself.

It is Mammo herself who is Indian, despite being Pakistani. At partition she had left with her husband and his family for Pakistan, leaving behind her sisters and their families. Written by Khalid Mohamed, it draws on his family story, and is directed by Shyam Benegal. [386] The elder sister Fayyazi,[387] is raising her teenage grandson, Riaz, who is a student at an elite school, a lively, unconventional character with a penchant for poetry

[383] Ramnath, 2021
[384] Internet archives, 01.11.2006
[385] Jimmy Cage, 2022
[386] Part of a trilogy about three women in Khalid Muhhamad's life, great-grandmother, great-aunt, and mother. All critically acclaimed, directed by Shyam Benegal.
[387] Fayyazi /Faizabai was the second wife of Suleman Cassim/Qasem Mitha, my great-grandfather.

and aspirations of becoming a writer. Mammo lands up out of the blue, delighted to be with her sister and share her experiences as a childless widow ill-treated by her in-laws.

Initially young Riaz resents her; he has to share his room. But Mammo wins his heart as she wins everyone's, by her open-minded pragmatism, her outspoken confidence, but mostly by her and sincere, sometimes meddlesome, curiosity about everyone—from the maid and taxi drivers to Riaz's friends and even the taciturn official who regularly and reluctantly extends her visa. When Riaz recites English poetry to his uninterested philistine friend, Mammo is extremely interested and promptly returns the favour by reciting Faiz's Urdu poetry, calculated to pique his interest. Later, she recounts her Partition experiences, evoking not simple violence but the surreal horror of an unfathomable scale beyond tragedy. He listens mesmerized. She introduces him to Ghalib, Manto, writers never mentioned in his English-medium school, and inspires him to begin writing her story. By hook and crook, Mammo keeps getting visa extensions, usually by presenting patently false medical certificates, but her stay eventually comes to an abrupt end when the immigration authorities suddenly deport her. She shouts at the police; "This is my motherland – I was born in Panipat, I have the right to be here!" to no avail. Fayyazi and Riaz are devastated but powerless, and for years she is lost to them.

One day when Riaz is a young man, the doorbell rings, and there she is! with a foolproof plan never to be sent back. Eventually the Indian authorities and the Pakistan embassy are presented with a bogus death certificate.[388] Mammo has outwitted them both. She is home to stay.

Both *Garam Hawa* and *Mammo* highlight the role of bureaucracy and the authorities in addition to public attitudes that make life difficult for Indian Muslims; in 2007, *Chak De* highlights how public attitudes can fuel insidious whispers to do the same. Pakistan is an off screen character, nevertheless crucial to the story.[389] The film deals head-on with what Indian Muslims face with reference to Pakistan. Although *Chak De* was inspired by "real incidents", which did not involve an Indian Muslim, the fact that the film choose this fictious angle is a measure of the writer, the director and the producer's desire to highlight (amongst other issues) the difficulties Muslims face, as well as their confidence

[388]This was before the aadhar card and the CAA.
[389] There are many films about Muslims that do not mention Pakistan, *Gully Boy* (2019), *Bobby Jasoos* (2014), *Well Done Abba* (2009), etc.

and boldness in doing so, as of the filmmakers of *Chak De, Garam Hava, Mammo*. This successful film is about Kabir Khan, once captain of the Indian hockey team. Seven years before our film begins, he lost an important match, missing the final penalty stroke against Pakistan. Dismissed amid public allegations that he sold out to Pakistan, "traitor" is daubed on his walls and he and his mother have to leave the neighbourhood which is their home. Pakistan is only referred to in how it affected Kabir Khan's career. Such an allegation is dangerous for anyone, but even more so for a Muslim. Our story starts when he is invited to coach the pathetic women's hockey team, because no one else will. A friend consoles him that everyone is allowed one mistake, but he looks at his friend and asks, "Everyone?", implying that that is not true for Muslim citizens of India, and specially when the mistake has to do with Pakistan. Never stated explicitly, this is present in the undercurrent throughout and occasionally in the snide comments of a disaffected team member or a subordinate. In *Chak De*, Kabir Khan re-establishes his credibility, giving credibility to India, the state and the idea both. The main story is about how he made a team out of disparate elements, and is not relevant for this research.

Mulk 2018 has a similar skeleton to *Chak De* 2007, although the mood is entirely different. In *Chak De*, the accusation is about sport and personal corruption, in *Mulk*, it is about terrorism. In *Chak De* the suspicions of losing a sports match ruins the life of one Kabir Khan, and his mother, as one expression of a national malaise. In Mulk**,** the action (as opposed to just accusations-against as in *Chak De)* of a single member, Shahid, impacts the whole joint family. The scenario of *Mulk* is stark and violent, Shahid alone is responsible for an attack in which dozens of people are killed, but in public opinion the whole family is guilty. As so many people have been killed there is pressure to avenge them, no quarter is given. What follows is predictable and is based on real events. *Mulk* is complex, understated, but dark, chilling, extreme, with an ending that is struggling to hold on to hope in the midst of despair, *Chak De* is simple, up-front, with a thrilling dramatic successful climax, high on hope. *Mulk* is about the Indian Muslim family of an Indian Muslim terrorist. *Chak de* is about a maligned Indian Muslim coach, and his diverse Indian team. In both films, Pakistan is not shown, nor are any Pakistanis. In *Chak de,* an Indian Muslim is falsely accused of taking a bribe from Pakistani. In *Mulk*, one son is actually a terrorist, the rest of the family is innocent. But a family member has made three phone calls to his sister in Pakistan, and received a couple too. The Hindu daughter-in-law says "Even I would be careful….", implying that it is doubly dangerous

for a Muslim. Simply having relatives in Pakistan, can be a serious problem for Indian Muslims. *Chak De* was made in 2007, *Mulk* in 2018, 11 years later.

Thakshak, (1999) in passing, *Dev* (2004), and *Khakee* (2004) in searing detail, all show the Othering that allows the coercion that Muslims are subject to, by accusing someone of collaborating with Pakistan, specially a Muslim, you can ruin his life and even end it. In *Khakee*, at a press conference, naming the Muslim doctor who is (falsely) scape-goated for terrorism, the ISI - not Pakistan - is directly named, by the real criminals, a powerful nexus of politicians, police, criminals, who engineer communal riots, the Muslim doctor who stood up to them is killed in police custody.

*Mission Kashmir (*2000), is a variation, and shows particularly the dilemmas of Kashmiri Muslims. A bold film, but the nation of India is still its highest ideal, despite an absence of jingoism. In polarized Kashmir, all Indian government servants, even Kashmiri Muslims, are enemies for the "other" side. *Fatvas* are given against them, and there is a heavy penalty on cooperating with them. So the doctor who treats SSP Khan is killed along with his wife and child, then Khan loses his son because no doctors will treat him. In a separate incident, because of excessive use of force, and by mistake, Khan kills a whole family. So the state of India may make "mistakes", through its servants, even resulting in many civilian deaths, but always for the greater good of India. Khan is horrified, and adopts the surviving child. When the child discovers this background, he joins the terrorists. Pakistan is not the manipulating Enemy, the masterminds are an international conglomerate, this is, in itself, keeping Pakistan out of the picture literally, a positive act of omission. Despite the fanatical masterminds, the young militants all have a back story. One says, "First those people (raped) my mother, so I came here with my gun. Now I hear that the people from across the border have done the same with my sister. ….". He means India and Pakistan, equating the two, accusing India also of heinous infringement of human rights. The film begins with "Two brave men battle each other and paradise burns." This refers to father and (foster) son, the Indian police officer and the Kashmiri militant, it is a brave sentence. The film is dedicated to "the centuries-old tradition of peace and harmony" and to children of conflict. The message is that despite India's good intentions, terrible mistakes have been made, therefore it will need a lot of love to woo the Kashmiris.

Partition

Partition is another area where this introspective trope is used. In *Nastik (*1954), the violence at Partition turns our protagonist into an atheist. Thereafter, it is his story back to God. *Train to Pakistan* (1998) is based on Khushwant Singh's book. Many attempts were made to make a film of it, once Merchant-Ivory even signed on Shashi Kapoor and Shabana Azmi, eventually, Pamela Rooks, funded by Channel 4 and NDFC (National Film Development Corporation of India), made it with an Indian cast. This film merits a mention, firstly it has the word Pakistan in the title. But the movie is about the far reaching effect of Pakistan on people unconcerned with it, rather than about Pakistan. It is one society, shattering down the middle. Indians are turning into Pakistanis, Othering is visibly happening. Other than one army officer, no Pakistanis are shown, except as absent actors, the perpetrators of some massacres. The army officer is shown in a neutral light, perhaps somewhat over-patriotic in his single sentence. The story is set in an Indian village, and so shows the good and bad deeds of the Indians. It shows the cowardice, collusion and cruelty of the administration, and individual human frailties that allow cataclysmic events to happen. The Muslims are an increasingly insecure minority, and Partition brings horrors that have their own momentum. Woven through is the love-story of a young Sikh petty criminal for a Muslim girl. When he realizes that an attack is planned on the train carrying Muslims (including his beloved) to Pakistan, he sacrifices his life to stop the attack, when no one in a more responsible position is willing to do so. It is an introspective look at Indian society.

In September 1999, another movie directly on the theme of Partition was released, *Earth 1947*. Again, slightly off the track of "Indian" cinema, directed by Canadian-Indian Deepa Mehta, it is based on *Ice-Candy Man* by Pakistani writer, Bapsi Sidhwa.[390] The cast and context is entirely "Indian", with Aamir Khan as a major character. It is unusual (but not unique, *Filmistan* (2012) *Welcome 2 Karachi* (2015) etc.) in that the story is set entirely in Pakistan. Based during the time of Partition, as seen through the eyes of a Parsee child in Lahore, it seems autobiographical. It shows the growing rifts between a mixed group of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh friends as Partition approaches and shows how violence at Partition was also used to settle personal scores. The violence is clearly on

[390] Also published as *Cracking India*.

every side. The Hindus and Sikhs are insecure, here it is the Muslims who have the power of being the majority community. It is a mirror image of *Train to Pakistan*, in which Sikhs have agency and Muslims are insecure. Where *Train to Pakistan* shows how a simple emotion like love ennobles a flawed soul, *Earth 1947* shows how a simple emotion like hatred, can metamorphose ordinary human beings into monsters when surrounded by violence and communal hatred**.** *Train to Pakistan* is about betrayal by the state, *Earth* is about betrayal by a friend. Like *Train to Pakistan , Earth* too is based on a book, on Partition literature, and has a foreign component.

Based in Lahore, it shows violence from both sides. The trains arriving full of slaughtered refugees, are the same, whichever side of the border they are on. It shows in a matter of fact way, that the embrace there had been, has been ripped asunder. Bharat critiques the book and the film[391] as having a nationalist tint (towards Pakistan), and the author's commitment to her (Pakistani) nationality and "Parsidom". This is unfair. It is Sidhwa's characters who speak so, appropriately for them, it is they who are "nationalist", and yes, the child Lenny, never questions "Parsidom", that too is entirely appropriate for Lenny's 12-year-old character. Sidhwa's characters speak of "our Jinnah sahib", and "your Gandhi", because this is the area that was Pakistan, and presumably those who considered Gandhi as "ours", in Lahore, kept their mouths shut. According to Bharat, Deepa Mehta makes a more neutral feast of the film than the book, I do not agree. Sidhwa is confident enough of her identity to be dispassionate and critical of her own community. Bharat herself writes that Sidhwa felt that Mehta understood every nuance of her story.[392] Preckel states "interestingly enough, the Parsi community in India is shown to be neither victim or perpetrator in the Partition",[393] but that is simply an undisputed reality. Preckel refers to Sidhwa as belonging to the Parsi community of India, but Sidhwa belongs to the Parsi community of Pakistan, a crucial difference in this context. *Earth* is interesting in that it is written from the perspective of an "outsider", she is a child, she is neither Hindu or Muslim, she is an observer of facts, rather than an interpreter. That it is written from more of a Pakistan perspective is also interesting, as most "Indian" films naturally tend to be from the Indian perspective, and provoke little comment for being so!

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[391] Bharat and Kumar 2008, 67
[392] ibid, 69
[393] Preckel, 2008, 81

The last of the Partition films that I discuss here is *Hey Ram* (2000), made by the South Indian actor-director Kamal Haasan, released in Hindi and Tamil simultaneously, also starring superstar Shahrukh Khan[394] in an extended "cameo". An emotionally invested film, by Kamal Haasan but also by Shahrukh Khan who took no fee. The film failed, its searing portrayal too complex and long. Focusing on Hindu extremism, Jinnah and Pakistan are held responsible for instigating violence. A long flashback (three hours and twenty-seven minutes in the Hindi version), it starts on the 7th anniversary of the Babri Masjid demolition, in Chennai. A young doctor attends an old archaeologist, Saket-Ram, whose grandson tells him Saket-Ram had worked on the Mohenjodaro excavations. The doctor recalls reading about Mohenjodaro in school, "Somewhere in North India, isn't it?" "Norther than that. It is in Pakistan. …."

The film flashbacks to a pre-Partition archaeological excavation in Mohenjodaro, led by Mortimer Wheeler. As archaeologists Amjad Khan and Saket-Ram uncover an exciting grave, Wheeler suddenly instructs them to pack up, citing "Pakistan", as a reason. Interpreting this as "Hindu-Muslim riots", Saket-Ram and Amjad roll their eyes, Saket-Ram assures a frustrated Khan that they will return, the friendship between the two men is obvious. Later, Amjad's wife, Nafeesa, who is Saket-Ram's *rakhee* sister, (again illustrating their closeness) accompanies them to the Archaeologists' Club, wearing a *dupatta* on her head, where the British Wheeler and the Muslim Amjad raise a toast to "India." Saket-Ram asks them which "India" they are toasting—the unified nation or a divided one, Wheeler remarks that Amjad might prefer Pakistan, alluding to his religion, but Amjad promptly refutes this, humorously asserting utter disinterest in a Pakistan that would impose Sharia law, so enjoying a drink would be forbidden, and emphasizes his commitment to a united India. Lajwani joins them, and the three men, Hindus and Muslim, sing a song celebrating their friendship. This background sets out not just the irreverence of the Muslim, Amjad, his lack of interest in Pakistan and his commitment to India, but also that religion was irrelevant to the affections and emotions of these people to each other.

On 16 August 1946, Saket-Ram arrives in Calcutta to find Muslim crowds chanting slogans in support of Pakistan and Jinnah. His Sikh taxi driver sarcastically remarks that the police are "on holiday" due to Suhrawardy's dual role as both the Premier of Bengal

[394] Hindi cinema's greatest superstar

and a "Muslim Leaguer", ensuring that Jinnah's Direct Action Day is "properly celebrated". Reaching home, there is an explicit love-scene with Saket-Ram and his Bengali wife, Aparna. Later, venturing outside, he witnesses the escalating violence, including a Muslim mob chasing a Sikh girl whom he rescues. His attempt to report the violence to the British authorities is met with superior indifference. Returning home, he is brutally attacked, and, in a harrowing scene, witnesses a group of Muslim men, including Altaf, Aparna's tailor, rape Aparna and cut her throat. She dies in agony in Saket-Ram's arms. Screaming in shock, he wanders out and witnesses Muslims being burned and killed while pleading for mercy, Muslim children thrown back into burning houses. He kills Altaf without compunction, as well as an old man who is merely present. Dazed and horrified, he is seized by a Hindu mob that mistakes him for a Muslim, but the mob leader, Abhyankar, saves him before resuming their slaughter of Muslims. Saket-Ram sees Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs killing and dying. These scenes show how the killing was on all sides, it also shows how non-communal people, in spite of themselves, and almost helplessly, became involved in the frenzy of killing and other unspeakable acts. It shows how ordinary people became communalized.

Next morning, Saket-Ram is still wandering in the town, now strewn with corpses, with screaming people searching for relatives, and circling vultures. He encounters Abhyankar again and voices his torment, saying that whereas Abhyankar's actions were driven by religion, ideals, and ideology, he had no such ideals. Haunted by the agony of his wife, he had become a murderer. He had killed Altaf for vengeance, but he had killed other Muslims for reasons he did not understand, he had never thought in these terms. Abhyankar replies tersely that his (Abhyankar's) sister had been raped by twenty men and killed. He blames not Suhrawardy or Jinnah, but Gandhi, for supporting Muslims amid communal tensions.

Traumatised, Saket-Ram flees Calcutta and goes home to Chennai where his family arrange to get him remarried. On 14th August, he remarks that he was getting married as the biggest divorce in history was taking place. A friend asserts that the creation of Pakistan was beneficial, Radcliffe had made a decisive incision and cut off the tumour,

and rid India of "these *miyan bhais"*[395] forever. Saket Ram is not convinced what his opinions are, his past militates against the new violence of which he is a part.

Back in Calcutta, at public meeting Saket-Ram publicly accuses Suhrawardy of turning ordinary men into murderers, and Suhrawardy accepts this. In Chennai, Saket-Ram suddenly sees a destitute Lalwani, their rich industrialist Sindhi friend, selling food on the street. Horrified, he listens to a weeping Lalwani tell of his house and crops burnt, his wife raped and killed, one child lost to dysentery in a camp, another missing, his parents cut to pieces on the trains. Unaware of Saket-Ram's suffering, he says, "You are a South Indian, how can you understand?" (the South not being touched by such violence during partition). Lalwani too, had been untouched by communalism, now too, no communalism is expressed, there is no need to express it, it is the foundation of their terrible new lived experiences.

Saket-Ram's devoted new wife is an uncompromising Gandhian, showing religious and traditional Hindus who were also adamantly non-communal, but by now, Saket-Ram, through Abhyankar, gets involved with influential princes and patrons who plan to assassinate Gandhiji, whom they accuse of being soft on the Muslims and thereby aiding Pakistan, which, in their analysis, has fomented all the violence they have suffered. From being a tolerant civilized professional man, far removed from violence or religion, Saket Ram has come full circle, not through argument but through the life which surrounds him, his own and others'. In a room adorned with portraits of Hitler and Savarkar, Saket-Ram and Abhyankar are chosen to assassinate Gandhiji, whom Saket-Ram sees in his mind's eye, in the shadow of the Pakistan flag. When Abhyankar is left paralyzed after an accident, Saket-Ram promises him that Saket-Ram will abandon family, and complete their mission to assassinate Gandhiji.

Later, Saket-Ram is accidentally in a tense Muslim area of Delhi, when Amjad Khan steps out of the shadows. Amjad is overjoyed, and inquires about Aparna. Saket-Ram coldly tells him that she was killed in the Calcutta riots. Immediately realizing that much is amiss, Amjad asks Saket-Ram if Aparna was killed by Muslims. Getting no straight answer, Amjad understands, "So you are here on behalf of the whole Hindu nation." When Saket-Ram remains silent. Amjad tells him passionately that Amjad's father was

[395] refers to Muslims

killed by Hindus. Saket-Ram responds coldly “Enough is enough. All of you should go away.” Amjad, with narrowed eyes, questions, “Go away? All of us? Where should we, ‘all of us,’ go?” Saket-Ram retorts, "To your Jinnah's Pakistan." Amjad replies that Jinnah's own daughter had chosen to remain in India, claiming it as her country, and asserts that he, Amjad, as a “child of Gandhi”, will definitely stay in India. Saket-Ram counters, asking, "With whose permission?" Amjad rejoins that he needs no one's permission to stay in his own country. Saket-Ram abuses Amjad as a “foreigner”, who had for 700 years been invading though the Khyber Pass and looting India. Amjad, coolly responds, "I’m not 700 years old. I am the same age as you." Then, in love and concern, he asks, "Ram, What has happened to you? Whether you consider me your brother or not, do you consider me your friend?" Saket-Ram replies coldly that it is only due to their past that he has not killed Amjad, adding times had changed and “look what you have started.” Amjad says that he will ask forgiveness for Aparna’s murder, and will forgive Saket-Ram for the death of Amjad’s father, if Saket-Ram will accept him as a brother. Saket-Ram rejects him, so Amjad, with open arms, challenges him: "Then kill me. Fulfil your lust for Muslim blood. …. Perhaps my death will free you from this madness." What is obvious in this conversation is that to Saket Ram, there is a conflation of Muslim and Pakistan, he does not separate the two, both are inherently evil, and responsible for evil. The current character of Amjad and this scene, as well as later scenes where other Muslims protect Saket Ram also balance out the initial violence which turned Saket Ram from being a tolerant human into an extremist Hindu. They also obviously show the Loyal Indian Muslim in the guise of Amjad, an Indian Muslim of Pukhtoon[396] descent, originally from the North West Frontier Province (which became part of Pakistan), who has no interest in Pakistan. It is also perhaps a gesture towards Ghaffar Khan, who was also known as the Frontier Gandhi, a Pukhtoon leader, who followed non-violent Gandhian principles.

Saket-Ram responds to Amjad with chilling resolve, stating that he intends to destroy the root cause: Gandhi. Amjad, in horror, says that Gandhi represents the only remaining sanity in India, "You have become mad, Ram."

[396] Pukhtoon/Pushtoon refer to the Pashto speaking ethnic group, also known as Pathans, who belong to the North West Frontier province of Pakistan and to Afghanistan.

A Hindu mob appears. Amjad says to Saket-Ram, "Pandit ji. If anything happens to me, look after your sister, Nafeesa." Amjad, despite being touched by equal horrors retains not just his old values, but also his trust in his friend. And Saket-Ram finds, that after all, he cannot let Amjad be lynched. When the crowd attacks Amjad, Saket-Ram shoots, fighting and killing follow, between the mob, and the besieged Muslims who protect Saket-Ram, but eventually Amjad dies. Amjad (a Pashtun) was to accompany Gandhiji on a long march to Pakistan,[397] Amjad's mother and Nafeesa (his wife) accompany a shocked Saket-Ram to visit Gandhiji, who asks Saket-Ram and Nafeesa to accompany him in Amjad's place. While they are there, Gandhiji is killed by Nathuram Godse.

In the present, the aged Saket-Ram dies because the ambulance can't get through the streets blocked for fear of Hindu-Muslim riots, communalism is ever-present, and nothing has made it go away, neither the creation of Pakistan, nor the assassination of Gandhiji.) At Saket-Ram's funeral, we see his wife Maitali and Amjad's Nafeesa.

An introspective film, trying to understand the tortured souls of those who have suffered through partition, and also those who inflicted the suffering, as well as looking for a way forward that rises above the past. It shows that religious traditionalism and adherence does not necessitate communalism but can overcome Othering, Gandhian-style. It states clearly that terrible violence was suffered on every side, but it is simple humanity and courage that can overcome this. While the film is clearly against the ideology that led to the creation of Pakistan, it balances this by showing Hindu extremism as a mirror image, and the love of Gandhiji as an embrace between Pakistan and India.

War Films

Even in some, obviously non-typical, war films, we find this introspective trope. The first of these, soon after the 1965 war, was *Upkar* (1967). This film is as much about the tragic fraternal relationship with Pakistan as it is about modern India's internal issues. Initially, the younger brother represents Pakistan, but this enemy gradually morphs into the internal enemy, the corrupt and criminal, engaged in black-marketing and corruption which eat the country from within. After irreparable losses, the two brothers are reunited. Bharat

[397] A tribute to Ghaffar Khan, the "Frontier Gandhi".

and Kumar consider that the India-Pakistan theme " … was mainly an adjunct to the larger concern of tracing the changing façade of independent India." [398] Raghavendra describes how while bringing in the war with Pakistan, "it shows India also fighting a treacherous internal enemy – hoarding and profiteering" [399]. Being brothers, the sameness and kinship can be taken for granted, and the shadowy enemy in the war does not change this.

Stumped (2003), is dedicated to "the soldiers of our Nation", and starts with well-known Indian cricketers offering their tribute to their soldiers. Pakistan is a prop, equated with terrorism and "the enemy". There is no Pakistani character, but in the time of Kargil, the film draws parallels between the war and cricket, both are basically entertainment for the masses, who know as little about cricket as about the war, both are a chance for vicarious thrills in humdrum lives. Raghav is called to the front. The TV carries the war news on one channel and cricket news on another. Local experts argue that whenever Indians start winning at cricket, the Pakistanis torture Indian POWS more. Another says, whenever India starts winning at cricket, Pakistan starts a skirmish at the border to distract Indian public opinion. Raghav is presumed killed. For the journalists, Kargil is a story, a Kargil death is a good story. One journalist is trying hard to convince her TV producer that the Kargil-widow-story is more important than the cricket-match-story. Filming the widow's interview, the photographer is constantly receiving and commenting on cricket updates. There is a happy ending, one day a taxi arrives. It is Raghav, with one leg amputated but otherwise alive and well. As usual the neighbours are watching a cricket match on TV, but they desert the TV screen in favour of live entertainment, and give him a hero's welcome home.

The 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, provided a backdrop to a "gentle coming of age film" [400] *Vijeta* (1982). Angad, writing to his father after a solo flight, says, "I am flying on the frontiers of the land from where my forefathers came, I will make war on these people, and it is not the battle that I am afraid of, only of this that my hands should not unwittingly be responsible for the death of some innocent." His father who has lived though, and been emotionally scarred by Partition, says to Angad, "Why is only war a bad thing, child?

[398] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, x
[399] Raghavendra, 2021, 156
[400] Datta, 2016

Riots are bloodier than war. In war, it is a declared enemy. And yes, innocents are also killed. But in riots we even kill our friends..… When I was too young I have seen the animal in man. I've lived it."

Saikat Datta writes, almost 35 years later,

> "The movie is … about individuals caught in the construct of a nation-state at war with another nation-state. The horrors of Partition, felt by Nihal Singh as a young man, are transferred to the horrors that his son Angad will see in war."

The "enemy country" isn't named, but it is clear that it is Pakistan. "It was about the young man in a young nation," Chitre told Datta. "Angad's choices were the choices faced by a newly independent young India."[401] Pakistan has no character and no role in this film, despite the sameness of the forefathers, it is simply the foil for Angad's growing up, for India's choices and duties to coalesce into shape.

Dhoop 2003 is about the loss of a son, and the trials and tribulations that the parents of an *shaheed* (martyred) Indian soldier go through at the hands of the Indian state. Based on real events, Pakistan is simply the factual military enemy.

In this regard these films, despite the context of war, do not focus on hostility ~~throughout~~, but also use the context to be introspective.

Scapegoating

Lastly, I touch on two films which mention the scapegoating of Pakistan, as a function of internal Indian issues. In *Dil Se* (1998) there is a one word mention of "Pakistan", when the main protagonist, Amarkant, a radio journalist, interviews a guerrilla leader of the Assam independence movement. He asks whether they are being supported by Pakistan and China, a passing villainizing of Pakistan by association, except that they guerilla leader rises above his villainizing.

In the same context, *Phir bhi dil hae Hindustani* (2000) deserves a mention. The film is a humorous condemnation with a sinister underbelly of the nexus between the politicians and the media, and how politicians produce violence and communalism out of thin air for

[401] Datta, 2016

their own benefit. Twenty years after it tanked, critic Jinal Bhatt wrote that it was a film too early for its time, … "… would the message that *Phir Bhi Dil Hai Hindustani* was trying to send feel more real than ever today? …. "

A man kills a politician who raped his daughter. It is convenient for all parties to portray him as a terrorist. Inventing a back-story, an officer says to the Police Commissioner, "…. use the 'foreign hand'", who replies, "Correct! *Videshi haath*! (Foreign hand) So he is a foreign terrorist!" This "foreign hand" in Indian politics is always Pakistan's, this is an acknowledgment of how an un-named Pakistan is a convenient and useful scapegoat.

Conclusion

This Chapter is the first of the empirical chapters, and it starts with the introspection of the Self, in which the Other merely provides a vantage point for this introspection. In different genres, and in different themes, we find the introspective trope, and in all, the focus is on India, or on an even more universal broader message. Perhaps the important effect that this trope highlights, is the effect that the existence of Pakistan has had on Indian Muslims in terms of how they are perceived by their compatriots. In these films that I have discussed, which use the "Introspective" trope, Pakistan has no agency, blaming Pakistan is extraneous and unimportant, the films look at the Indian Muslim situation, and the attitude of the majority, as India's problem and India's internal issue. Pakistan is not an actor in these films. It is a mirror the Self holds up to judge itself. Whether Pakistan has created the problem or not is not the issue, but the problem exists in India simply because Pakistan exists. It is not Pakistan's problem, it is India's problem, both the problem and its resolution lie in India.

But this is not the only strand. Pakistan is used as a mirror to introspect other issues of Indian society, honour, gender, Hindu extremism, secularism, corruption, including political corruption, victimization, a questioning of the whole concept of the nation and the state, provoking thoughtfulness in "coming of age" films, or simply even Indian policies, as in *Pan Singh Tomar* (2012). The conclusion is pithy and powerful. Pakistan is not the focus, nor an "important" character in these films, it is almost "not present", but it is not absent. The India-Pakistan story is interwoven in all of these internal issues

in a way that no other country can be. The very existence of Pakistan, even off stage, has changed the stories of the Self, has changed India's own stories forever.

After starting with the Self, in the next chapter the discussion moves on naturally to the Other. I deal first with the default option of Othering first, which is Hostility, before moving on to other and more reconciliatory possibilities of Othering.

Chapter 4 – Hostile Tropes

This chapter identifies and analyses hostile tropes. These are widely accepted as the most pervasive portrayals of Pakistanis in Indian cinema. I relate this to the Self, to Othering and Sameness, and place the discussion in the context of the other tropes discussed as part of the thesis. This will serve to illustrate the complexity that I consider pervades the portrayal of Pakistan in Hindi cinema.

This chapter complicates the popular assumption that Indian films portray Pakistan in a hostile light. This assumption of hostility rests on a popular interpretation around what is hostile and what is friendly, but this categorization, though widely repeated, comes with a number of caveats when subjected to more rigorous analysis. Many such films have strands that do not fit blanket definitions. Additionally, there is a pattern where a sentence or two in the film states, virtually as a disclaimer, that the Pakistani *people* are different to the Pakistani authorities, sometimes there is even differentiation between different authorities. Pakistan is the Other, but the Other is not monolithic. There are also films where the audience is antagonized from Pakistan, "disclaimers" or minor portrayals notwithstanding.

Film "messages" are open to interpretation and audiences absorb different messages. It is more useful to discuss hostile or reconciliatory tropes, rather than hostile or friendly films. A film often carries competing and contradictory tropes, expressed through different characters. *Border 1997*, often considered a jingoistic movie, also conveys anti-war messages, its signature song "*Mere dost, mere dushman, mere bhai*" (My friend, my enemy, my brother) is an iconic anti-war song played with visuals of the Indian and the Pakistani flags fluttering side by side, perhaps the only "war film" to have such an image! The words of this song contain within them Owning (my friend), Othering (my enemy), and Embracing (my brother). *Kabul Express* (2006) morphs into presenting an empathetic portrayal of the Pakistani character initially portrayed as hostile, and the searing film *Sarabjit* (2016) (based on a true case) holds out a proactive hand of friendship at the end, despite both these films presenting a villainous portrayal of the Pakistani state.

Tropes are hostile or conciliatory depending on the context. Presenting communalism as promoted exclusively by vested interests may be negating justified concerns, and cloak a

denial to examine the root causes of antagonistic representation, or it could be a means to affirm brotherhood. No single trope in isolation defines a film, it is the film, taken as a whole, that influences the perception of the trope, context is essential.

This chapter explores three major tropes which are the dominant means by which the films analysed for this thesis express hostile othering of Pakistan. It begins with a discussion of the Other as the Enemy. The second section explores the tropes of Paternalism and hierarchy[402] while the final section looks at the Denial of Othering.

The Other as Villain and Enemy

This is the expected portrayal, following popular assumptions about Indian film, and is the most dominant of the hostile tropes, where Pakistan is the villainous enemy, violent, vicious, boastful, untrustworthy, hyperbolic, cowardly, and described in violent, aggressive or abusive language; used regularly, simply and unsophisticatedly as the natural go-to "bad-guy" whenever you need one for a story. This villain is immediately recognizable, by his very face, gestures, voice, body language, his "political visage".[403] Valorising the Indian military is a favourite subject, many films are collaborations with the Indian military,[404] the natural default enemy is Pakistan. Terrorism is another favourite subject, again, Pakistan is a default setting. But even such films display the Other-within-the-Self.

Beyond ideology, there is a practical advantage for this Pakistan-bad-guy trope - Indians can play Pakistanis, they look the same, and in Hindi cinema, the language is the same. China too, is a nuclear, hostile neighbour. But it is more complicated to present a Chinese character, or a British/white character, for example, requiring multilingualism, sub-titles, or plotlines to explain their fluency in Hindi. The odd film, *Haqeeqat* (1964) is the best known, portrays the Chinese enemy, but it is so much simpler to have Pakistanis as enemies. This very aspect demonstrates commonalities, Pakistan is the easiest villain to present simply because we are interchangeable, there is a Sameness. The very separation

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[402] For Hansen (2006), even when the Other is shown as neutral, there are always views of superiority and inferiority, thus hierarchy, as quoted in Resende, 5
[403] Beydoun, 2021
[404] *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973), *Ab Tumhare Hawale Watan Saathiyo* (2004), *Baby* (2015), *Fighter* (2024), many others

and Otherness that that such films wish to present cannot be divorced from the similarities.

Overt hostility in cinema came about after the 1965 war, and has been a prevalent theme since. Although Indian cinema defaults to selecting Pakistan to manifest villainy, the issues are not particularly India-Pakistan related, the villain does not have any inherent Pakistan-specific characteristics. Such films show the Self as virtuous and the Other as its opposite, manifesting opposing traits of villainy, seeking purity for the Self, through demonization of the Other. [405] There is a simple dichotomisation between virtue and villainy. In his discussion of the representation of Pakistan in these films, Raghavendra uses the word 'nationalism' as portraying positive sentiments, love of one's country, home, "a common nationhood bringing Indians together."[406] In contrast,

> "we may define 'patriotism' as directed outside the nation, singling out a national enemy like Pakistan…… With the rise in anti-Pakistani sentiment, it is patriotism that has gained rather than nationalism, unity against and animosity towards an external adversary"[407]. …. Patriotism, singling out an external enemy, [is] usually associated with right-wing extremism and fascism, …. [commercial] cinema is therefore where patriotism is most comfortable." [408]

In most post-colonial countries, "nationalism" and "nationalists" are still identified with that positive internal unity that defined the freedom movements against the colonial power.

Nation-building in the "traditional" sense, before and after Independence, focused on how to build the post-colonial nation and was premised on "Indian" values of inclusivity, plurality and tolerance. *Andolan* (1951) is just one example which shows the Hindu protagonist saving a Muslim and giving a speech extolling these values.

The following analysis of the Other as Enemy is divided into three - war films, terrorism films (which sometimes include war), and miscellaneous films. Hostility can be seen self-

[405] Chaturvedi, 2001
[406] Raghavendra, 2021, 156
[407] ibid
[408] ibid

evidently in war and terrorism, but it is also there in other types of film, including romantic ones.

The War Films foregrounding the Villainy Trope

The first film of this genre appeared after the 1965 India-Pakistan war (in 1970), and since then it has been a constant trope. *Prem Pujari* (1970), directed and acted by superstar Dev Anand, (his *Hum Ek Hain* (1946) had been a paean for secularism and unity), mentions Pakistan by name, and is based in the 1965 war. The Pakistani army is a villainous enemy, threatening to roast children, parade women naked, dismember soldiers, boastful, communal, divisive, cowardly, bombing civilians, beating up a disabled man, and inciting Indian Muslims, who demonstrate their loyalty.

Ram, son and grandson of distinguished soldiers, is in the army, but believes in non-violence. In the India-China war, he refuses to fire, is court martialled, and jailed. Escaping, he wanders the world. The first sudden mention of Pakistan comes after two thirds of the movie, the radio reports a Pakistani attack. Hereupon the focus is India-Pakistan. Ram returns to his village as Pakistani planes bomb fleeing civilians. His ten-year-old brother, rushing to fight 'the enemy' with a gun, is severely wounded in a bomb attack. After battling with himself, Ram picks up the gun. We know the Indians and their families, the Pakistanis are faceless. Ram steals a Pakistani uniform, it is sameness which allows this, kills the Pakistani soldiers who are surrendering to him with their hands up (surely a war crime), as he says, "We non-violent and love-worshipping people only want peace but we are not cowards!" Mansah writes,

> " …. Ram amends (sic) his ways and is perfectly happy to Rambo it against the enemy (who is not people anyway) - and so are not worth keeping alive, even when they have handed in their weapons. The nationalism is palpable and boring,…"

51 years later, another war film, *Bhuj* (2021) also has the women affirming, "If Pakistan wins then all of us will take poison together. Because ….. we will be disrobed publicly….." and follows a standard stereotype of the lecherous Pakistani.

War is a small part of *Prem Pujari,* although perhaps its raison d'etre. In contrast, in 1997 *Border* was made, with Sunny Deol. Though it is still debated whether this was a "patriotic" war film or an anti-war film, there is plenty in it to feed the jingoistic. Based

on a 1971 battle, *Border* focuses on the high personal costs of war to Indian soldiers' families. Parallel to military exhortations for the motherland is the reality of non-military life, in which they find no echo. The film was hugely successful, had positive reviews, won awards (including "Best Film on National Integration", although there is no significant Indian Muslim character in the film). There is hardly any Pakistani presence, an ambiguous group of informants are summarily killed. The mostly off-screen Pakistani commander's villainy is in his theatrically evil laugh, his vicious voice and his unprofessional personal taunts, similar to *LOC-Kargil*.[409] *Border* shows one ordinary Pakistani soldier, who displays no active evil characteristic, only the passive one of cowardice, "Sir, I beg you, don't kill me, ….in the name of your *Bhagwan* (God), ….". Both Pakistanis portrayed are despicable. The cowardly Pakistani soldier who gives what little information he has to the Indians, has similar issues to the ordinary Indian soldiers, but none of them, no matter how painful their home circumstances, are cowards. The Pakistanis are shown running away with their backs to the enemy, establishing Pakistani cowardice.

Deewar (2004), *Agnipankh* (2004), *1971* (2007) and *Dil Pardesi ho gaya* (2003) are about undeclared Indian POWs that India alleges Pakistan holds. The very premise is an accusation of illegal and unethical behaviour by Pakistan, so these are negative presentation of both the Pakistan government and military. None of the films present any reason why these POWs were never reported, and why they remain alive. This itself is a comment – the reason is simple villainy.

1971 mentions 54 such prisoners, *Agnipankh* 523. Each film shows torture and brutality by Pakistanis, onscreen or off, *Agnipankh* also shows and justifies the same by the Indians. In *Deewar* too, brutality is on both sides, but far more on the Pakistani side, they are the ones in power. The Pakistan flag presides over the camp where we see chained men, chained dogs, barbed wire reminiscent of a Nazi camp, a tied-up elderly Indian officer being whipped senseless, Pakistanis throw a maltreated dead Indian soldier to be eaten by vultures, hang a prisoner in a particularly cruel manner. In *1971* (2007), Pakistani Army and prison authorities lull the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and the IRC into believing that there are no such Indians in Pakistan's custody. *1971* (2007) is a restrained film, of a different quality to hyperbolic films like *Deewar* (2004),

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[409] In neither *LOC-Kargil*, nor *Border* is there any Muslim soldier in a significant role

Border (1997), *The Hero* (2003), etc. A group of the prisoners escape, dressed in Pakistani army uniforms, but one by one they die, leading to an unusual ending – failure. The protagonist, Suraj Singh, enters Indian soil, but is shot dead by pursuing Pakistanis, while he stands on Indian soil, they on Pakistani soil. The Pakistani officer deliberately mis-identifies him as a Pakistani deserter, so the Indian border security allows Pakistanis to drag his body back from India to Pakistan. A shocking and poignant moment, speaking of the sameness inside the uniform. An Indian reviewer writes that *1971* (2007) does not present Pakistanis in an unfavourable light, [410]

> "In any other film around Indo-Pak tensions, we would probably see hyperbolic visuals of the torture and injustice meted upon Indian officers by unhinged evil Pakistani officers….. visuals of any brutality ….are kept to a minimal, and remain implied rather than graphic."

In my opinion, the few good "Pakistanis" are shown as besieged (like HRCP), or silent, due to loyalty, like Maj. Mallick. Marks of torture on the Indian soldiers make it clear that there is violence off screen. Pakistani officers are mendacious and enjoy the deception. They are panic-struck under pressure, gullible and manipulatable as well as manipulative, trying to entice an Indian Muslim into becoming their agent. That he is a "Shia Muslim", is gratuitously highlighted, then never mentioned again. There is no discussion of the ethics or the reasons for concealing these Indian POWs. That such a presentation is not considered "unfavourable" by Indian reviewers, speaks for itself.

These are some "war" films in which the enemy is presented as treacherous and evil. I contrast this with another trope in war films, that of the 'Military Enemy', to demonstrate the different nature of hostility expressed even in war films – the villainous enemy versus the honourable enemy.

The Military Enemy

This is a different genre to simple villainy. Pakistan is clearly the Other, but the depiction comes with some sense of respect. there is a factual Othering here, rather than a moral one. The most notable film that accords Pakistan the status of an equal adversary is

[410] Harsh, 2022

Hindustan ki kasam **(**1973) made by Chetan Anand. In 1971, India openly and militarily supported Bangladesh to gain its independence. For many Pakistanis, that war was less about losing a part of itself, and more about India's role in that loss and in Pakistan's humiliation. The film is a highly melodramatic version of an actual incident. Bharat and Kumar (2008) state that this film not only clearly identifies Pakistan as the enemy, but sets a trend of using anti-Pakistan sentiments in the forging and discovering of an Indian national identity.[411] Yet in 2018, The Print wrote;

> "Released two years after the 1971 war, the film is about rivals on the war front, but they are portrayed as brothers and not enemy caricatures. ….The film maintains a respectful dignity toward the enemy, a sentiment that is relevant in these hyper-nationalistic times." [412]

It is one of the handful of films that presents a normal Pakistani military officer, rather than a foaming-at-the-mouth villain, *Sarhad Paar* (2006), *Deewar* (2004), *1971* (2007) are others, although they also present the villains.

At the beginning of *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973), this script appears;

> "Whoever wins a war? Everyone loses. When brother fights brother, there is more pain in the heart than anger…….. the fight was not with these brothers but with the military government…."

This opening statement establishes both kinship and sameness. The opening scenes show cheerful, secular, westernized Indian army officers, including Muslims. Typically, in the film, Pakistan is the aggressor, although India had invaded Pakistani territory in Bengal before Pakistan retaliated on the western front. The film shows a family in which one sister's family are Indian, the other sister's, Pakistani.[413] In the subcontinent, there are no greater ties than kinship and blood. The children of these two sisters, first cousins (in the subcontinent, brothers and sisters) look like each other, but have never met. Two of the cousins are air-force pilots, one Indian, one Pakistani. In an air battle, unknowingly, the Pakistani cousin kills the Indian cousin. He parachutes into India, and longs to see his

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[411] Bharat and Kumar 2008, p x
[412] Upadhyaya, 2018
[413] This is the exact situation in Chetan Anand's in-laws, which included brothers-in-laws in both armies, his children have Pakistani first cousins (I am one of them). The similarity ends there, because the cousins in the film are shown as strangers to each other, which is not the case in reality.

aunt. Once there, they all (including him) realise that the man he has killed is her son and his own cousin/brother, he is given up by his Indian cousins into Indian custody. He is the Enemy Other, the new nation has trumped this aeons-old bond of blood. His aunt is not vengeful, only sorrowful, "The land on that side or this side is the same land. This land is not thirsty for blood." But no one listens. She represents the older generation with their non-violence, the modern generation has clearly moved on to "Other" each other.

The Pakistani woman cousin is kidnapped by the Indian army, so that her Indian cousin can impersonate her and spy on Pakistani. The two women cousins meet, and are delighted (although one knows that she is going to be practicing a deception). The Indian officer looks at them and says, "Now who would ever think you two sisters are enemies?" There is no rebuttal, no soul searching. When the captured Pakistani army officer is shown his sister in Indian custody, and pressurized to give information, he remains steadfast, begging his sister to be the same, for her country's sake, no matter what they do to her. The captured Pakistanis are brave and patriotic.

This film entirely accepts the post-colonial legacy and concept of the nation-state, there is no questioning, no loyalty that is greater, neither blood nor God. Without villainising, even with respect, it establishes Pakistan as the Enemy Other. This position is acceptable to Pakistan which too has no interest in cross border familial ties, ignoring them if not actively obstructing them.[414] This film does not deny past Oneness, but there is no embrace of the present Other, despite the opening disclaimer, despite the upright characters of the Pakistanis, despite the family links, that is why this is considered a hostile film.[415]

In *Upkaar* (1967) Pakistan is, at face value, simply the military enemy, never named. The story is allegorical. Bharat is the elder brother, Prem Kumar (Pakistan), the recalcitrant younger brother. The story is about their duty to their mother, the symbolism obvious. The man who creates the rift between the brothers, says "When brother fights brother, outsiders reap the benefits." Bharat says to Puran, who is demanding his share, "The Land is a mother. And one does not cut a mother into pieces…. I am Bharat. My soul weeps." Bharat signs the land over to his brother's unborn children. Then war happens. The actual "Enemy", Pakistanis, are shadowy figures, faceless and nameless, seen through battle-

[414] Zamindar, 2010
[415] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, x

smoke. Prem, representing Pakistan, morphs into corrupt modern India. Finally, after irreparable losses, the brothers reunite. Kinship is recognized, but Pakistan is Othered as the modern enemy. Prem's return into the family fold implicitly reflects the nostalgic-patronizing attitude towards Pakistan, but would also be the standard culmination of any Indian family drama.

This trope is briefly glimpsed in the jingoistic *Border (*1997) when the Pakistani soldier is begging for his life, the Indian officer says, "….you are a soldier for your country. We will treat you as soldiers should treat each other."

Lakshya (2004) is about Kargil, and a young man's coming of age, there are only two references to Pakistan. The script is by Javed Akhtar, who has been part of the People to People movement between India and Pakistan, and critical of both the Indian and Pakistani governments. Speaking with Tavishi Alagh;

> "…. I met the soldiers on the front and was moved by their experiences. I found powerful stories…. of courage…. I was … impressed by the dedication and focus …. should we not tell the stories of our brave young men and women ….because the enemy is Pakistan? ….Kargil is a true story, …. the bodies found there were disowned by the neighbouring country.[416] ….if people don't approve of war stories, eradicate war….. When there is even a remote hope of reconciliation …. such films are not made. Cease hostilities, and the treatment of Pakistan in our films changes." [417]

In *War Chhod Na Yaar* (2013), the Indian army officer says despite his personal friendships with Pakistani soldiers, "….I'm a captain, not the Prime Minister! And I and my men, are duty bound to carry out any orders." (and treat Pakistan as a military enemy). *Shershaah* (2021), like every Indian film mentioning Kargil, (*LOC-Kargil*-2003, *Lakshya*-2004, *No one Killed Jessica*-2011, *Tiger-3*-2023 etc.*)* reiterates that Pakistan refused to own the bodies of its soldiers, which were then buried unclaimed. Again, sameness makes it impossible to tell Indians and Pakistanis apart. Like *Lakshya,* (2004) the Pakistanis in the film are faceless, nameless, the film is a tribute to an Indian hero and the Indian military, not the particularity of the conflict.

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[416] This euphemism is part of the lexicon, as if Pakistan is India's only neighbour
[417] Alagh, 2008, 190

Both these two war tropes are hostile, but the nature of Othering is entirely different. In the first, there is an inherent evil in the very nature of the Other which inspires a visceral hatred, whereas in the case of the military enemy, there is no hatred, the hostility is temporal and professional and not personal.

The Terrorism films

The single largest genre in which Pakistan features, is the terrorist genre. I have separated this into two tropes, those in which the Pakistani state is directly involved in terrorism, and the mood is one of "retaliatory" hatred, and those which foreground the Kashmiri militant.

Pakistan as Terrorist

In this section, I discuss *Sarfarosh* (1999) first. Although *Roja* (1992) was perhaps the first "terrorist" film, it fits in more appropriately in the next section, when discussing the "homegrown-terrorists" who are misled by Pakistan. In *Sarfarosh* (1999) the emphasis is on Pakistan.

In 1998, India tested five nuclear devices, Pakistan responded by testing six. International sanctions were placed on both countries, both responded by conducting long-range missile tests. In February 1999, Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee met Pakistani Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif. They signed the Lahore Declaration, the first major agreement in over 25 years, reaffirming the Simla agreement (1972), and initiating Confidence Building Measures. *Sarfarosh*[418] (1999) had been over three years in the making. Going against this unusually cordial political climate, it had a difficult time getting Certification. Filmmaker John Matthan said,

> "The Censors wanted to ban the film…. …. they felt that my film is going against …. trying to be friendly with Pakistan. … I managed to release the film.…after a lot of cuts …. The Censor Board …. insisted that I replace 'Pakistan' with….

[418] Sarfarosh means someone happy and enthusiastic to sacrifice his life for a cause

> 'padosi mulk' (neighbouring country) …. 'Pakistan' has been mentioned more than 40 times …. this would butcher my film…. [Eventually] The film was released with the words 'Pakistan' and 'ISI' ….' , but many scenes showing violence were cut …. I needed to show…. . the end result of any terrorist activity is violence….."[419]

The film was released in April 1999 and was a huge hit. [420]

In *Sarfarosh*, Pakistan's untrustworthiness, aggression, fomenting of disaffection and terrorism, communalism, and its sectarianism within, are all evident. Despite the political optimism, by May 1999, the Kargil War started. There was confusion and animosity; India accused the Pakistan army of infiltrating India posing as militants; Nawaz Sharrif tried to portray, unsuccessfully, that he was unaware of this operation by his own army. [421]

The film shows Pakistan fanning discontent and terrorism. In turn, the movie persistently highlights discrimination within Pakistan, against the Muhajirs. [422]. Four Pakistanis are shown in this film, the poet Gulfam, the major, the general, and a peripheral ISI agent. All are despicable. Gulfam is initially shown as an attractive and charming character, embraced by India, but he is the most treacherous, proving that he should never have been embraced. Sameness is the basis of the friendship, Gulfam's music and poetry are equally appreciated in both countries. But the wholesale Othering destroys this. Sadly, the film creates suspicion against Pakistani artists who often are a positive link and generally consider themselves to be promoting peace and friendship.

After Kargil, the Musharraf-Vajpayee handshake, ceasefires, bombings, made for a politically volatile period, and there was a spate of movies about Indo-Pakistan. In both 2003 and 2004, at least 12 films each were made with an Indo-Pakistan reference. More than half have similar hostile tropes portraying Pakistan, *Aaya Toofan* (1999), *Pukar* (2000), *Gadar* 2001, *Indian* 2001, *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata* 2002, *Ma Tujhe Salaam* 2002, *Border Hindustan ka* 2003, *LOC Kargil* 2003, *The Hero* 2003, *Qayamat* (2003), *Zameen* 2003, *Dil Pardesi ho gaya (2003),16-December* (2004), *Asambhav* (2004), *Deewar*

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[419] Seta, 2022
[420] "Ten best Bollywood Movies of 1999". imdb.
[421] Express India, "Kargil planned before Vajpayee's visit: Musharraf" July 13, 2006
[422] Discussed in the last section of this chapter.

(2004), *Lakshya* (2004), *Agnipankh* (2004), *Black Friday* (2004), *Ab tumhare hawale watan saathiyo* (2004). Although different in detail, Pakistanis morphs into an unsubtle Other, evil, fanatical, pathological, inviting violence, which is delivered. Yet 2004 is remembered for the two top iconic films, *Veer-Zara* and *Main hoon na,* both on reconciliatory themes, discussed in Chapter 6.

In *Pukaar* (2000), there is one such Pakistani character, a senior army officer, the rest, hundreds, are all balaclava-ed figures. In *Indian* (2001), the Pakistani is the stereotypical crazed-mullah-terrorist, Waseem, who says, "…..We cannot win a face to face battle with Indians. ….. We will cut out their eyes and their tongue." Indian prisoners in Pakistan are brutally dealt with by Pakistani captors. In India, the police officer says to the terrorist, "We know how to shake hands and we also know how to pull your arm out." In *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata* (2002), another textbook example of these patterns, militant Pakistani leaders raise slogans of Kashmir being incorporated into Pakistan.

"The critics were unanimous in condemning *Ma Tujhe Salaam* (2002) for its unrealistic storyline and gratuitous anti-Pakistan sentiment." [423]. "Totally jingoistic, this film is only for those who believe that the way to solve our troubles with Pakistan is to bomb it out of existence or bore them to death with our mindless patriotic films," said a reviewer.[424] The Pakistanis are savage, disgusting, cowardly, communal and incompetent jokers. A suicide bomber says that Pakistan has the right to Kashmir; Maj. Pratap lets out a roar, throws away his gun, and advances while a militant version of *Vande Mataram* plays to a rising crescendo, and the hands of the terrified suicide bomber tremble so much that he cannot connect the wires required to explode. He wets himself in fear. It is disgusting, and meant to be, and Pratap has a disgusted look on his face, as the man begs for mercy, while Pratap beats him up. "You would separate our Kashmir from Hindustan?" A soldier says, "…. Ever since this scoundrel Pakistan was made, they've been baiting us." Another, "These Pakistanis don't understand that if all of India's people stand at the border and (he makes the gesture of little finger to urinate) there will be a flood in Pakistan. Bloody two faced people."

As for *Border Hindustan ka* (2003); Lal argues,

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[423] "Reel-life patriotism flops at Indian box office." DAWN, February 7, 2002
[424] ibid

> "If one were prepared to be abundantly charitable, one could rescue *Border Hindustan ka* as a film about Hindi films, as a wholly conscious spoof of Hindi film moments. But it beggars the imagination to suppose that the director of this pathetic film, which bores with its didacticism and mindless jingoism, could have been self-reflexive about his film."[425]

In *The Hero* 2003, a Taliban-style Kashmiri cleric accuses the Pakistan government of selling-out to the Americans, dumping the Taliban under US orders, and letting down Kashmir. The head of ISI, Izhaq says, "Pakistan's revenge against India will not be complete without separating Kashmir from Hindustan…..but the Pakistan government cannot do this. There are untold international pressures on Pakistan. But there is no pressure on you jihadis ……the ISI will find ways for you to steal the nuclear bomb." The Kashmiri maulana replies, "You and us, we cannot be disentangled." Elsewhere, an Indian officer says, "…. We have to expose Pakistan which nurtures terrorists inside our country, [but] …. publicly and internationally it condemns terrorism." In *Zameen* 2003, too, the Pakistan government is sponsoring terrorists, there is an ISI headquarters in Kashmir, and a Pakistani major accompanies terrorists into India. There are no good Pakistanis, nor even one 'misguided' terrorist. The film shows a plane hijack, based on IC-814, in which Pakistan's involvement and hypocrisy is showcased. The terrorist leader, Zaheer says to the Indian Colonel: "You are 100 crore half naked hungry people. …. You call your country your mother, don't you, well, we will rip your mother apart." (Misogyny in addition to the violence.) " ….we killed you like rats in Kargil…. If all these dogs of yours weren't around us, I would have buried you here too!" "Rats" and "dogs" are the epithets used by the Indians for the Pakistanis in *LOC-Kargil* (2003) made the same year, although the directors and writers are different, so this is an interesting mirroring. *Ye Dil Aashiqana* (2002) calls Pakistanis, "ants".

16-December **(**2002)[426], introduces an Indian and a Pakistani officer as mirror images of each other, Sameness is to be showcased. Perhaps this is done to accord Pakistan the status of equal adversary, but unsuccessfully, as no commonality is established. Gen. Singh is fair and valorous, Dost Khan, violent and vicious says, "I wish to cut the head off every Indian !" and as Chief of the ISI, "starts spreading terrorism in Punjab and

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[425] Lal, Vinay, UCLA Social Sciences, (no date)
[426] On 16 Dec 1971, the Pakistan Army surrendered to the Indian army in Dhaka.

Kashmir……" The valorous General Singh says as Dost Khan is captured, "Beat him thoroughly, but make sure he stays alive." The film ends implying yet another round of "retaliation" from India.

Sunny Deol, is the "protagonist-hero" in at least seven films foregrounding the villainy trope, *Border* (1997), *Gadar* (2001), *Indian* (2001), *Ma Tujhe Salaam* (2002)**,** *LOC-Kargil* (2003), *The Hero* (2003), and *Gadar 2*. His characters in every film blur into each other, the gentle man who is a super-patriotic tiger once roused. When challenged that *Gadar-2* (2023) was another anti-Pakistan film, the actor replied, "Don't take this film so seriously... cinema (is) for entertainment. …. there's an exaggeration in cinema ….. If they're not exaggerated, you don't enjoy it. Because if a person is bad, you want to say no, he is bad.…..It's not actually the people, …. because at end of the day, it's all humanity there. Whether it's here or there (Pakistan), everyone's together. …. Tara Singh (his character*)* is not that kind of a person. ….We all want peace, you know, ….. it's high time the politicians started seeing the world not from [the point of view of votes]…" [427] This prominent actor justifies movies that fuel hatred and prejudice, but bring success for him. Sunny Deol is an elected BJP MP, one of the "politicians" he is decrying. *Gadar* (2001)*, Gadar-2* (2023), and *Border* (1997), three of his most hugely successful films are some of Hindi cinema's most anti-Pakistan movies. Whatever his personal views, or his rhetoric on Indo-Pak peace may be, the easy and gross vilification of Pakistan in his films has earned him stardom. *Gadar-2* (2023) marked a big comeback for him.

Film-wise, there was never again a period of the same widespread and concentrated hostility, although we are definitely in such a period again at the current moment. 2005 had a couple of hostile films, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2013 and 2014 had one each, but largely (with exceptions) these did not have direct confrontation with Pakistan. *Kurbaan* (2009) a slick and clever thriller, gives the terrorists a not-unsympathetic voice, but gratuitously reveals the main terrorist (and most of the others) to be Pakistani, for no particular reason. In 2015 *Baby* was released, made with the cooperation of the Indian air force.[428] It glorifies horrific extra-legal violence, reliving Indian rage and fury at the 26/11 (2008) attacks, 7 years earlier, and the mood of the newly elected (2014) government, despising

[427] Hindustan Times, " Sunny Deol reacts to Gadar 2 being called 'anti-Pakistan': Don't take this film so seriously", 27.08.2023
[428] Also *Hindustan ki kasam* 1973**,** *Vijeta* 1982, *Bhuj* 2021 etc.

the "civilized"/meek" "Gandhian" style responses of "previous" governments. "We (the covert unit, Baby) were born because of 26/11. Wisdom lies not in dying inside your own house, but in striking inside the enemy's house", *Uri* (2019) uses almost exactly the same words. The films *Phantom* (2015), *D-Day* (2013), are part of this genre, an extra-state/vigilante justice, a predominant trope in Indian cinema. The film shows "border areas", as does *Holiday* 2013 too, a euphemism for Pakistani territory. *Omerta* (2017) is about Omar Shiekh, who killed American journalist Daniel Pearl. It shows ISI running training camps, the hijack of IC-814, in which 3 people were exchanged for the passengers, one being Omar Shiekh, and Prime Minister Vajpayee saying there was evidence that Pakistan encouraged the hijackers. After Pearl's killing, Pakistani army officers tell Shiekh, "Omar, your trial will be held in Pakistan. No extradition. …. soon you'll be ruling the hearts of crores of Muslims all over the world.", and reassure him that his wife and child will be looked after by Pakistan, as it has always done for "you people".

Uri-the Surgical Strike (2019), again, shows the strike as "retaliation", in the aftermath of the 2016 Uri attack. Young Turks within the Indian establishment assert that non-violence is a sign of weakness and invites further attacks. Retaliation is vociferously advocated, announcing the "New India", rather than the Old India of Gandhian Non-violence. In real life, the BJP government claimed this was the first "surgical strike." A senior army officer, Gen. Hooda, contested this, saying that at least 6 surgical strikes had been conducted between 2004 and 2014, militarily essential, but not publicised by the Congress government, as such politicization of the military would be detrimental. He was vilified by the BJP.[429] The film portrays this as a new strategy of the BJP government. The first half of *Uri* is a family film, the second a war/action film. Trade analyst Amod Mehra says, "…. *Uri* arouses patriotic emotions and is a slap on the face of our enemy No.1, namely Pakistan." [430] It shows a Pakistani official on television denying any involvement in terrorism. The actual attack was claimed by Jaish-i-Mohammad, a militant Kashmiri organization.[431] In the film, senior official Govind, cites Israeli action against the PLO with admiration. This open citing and approval of Israel is another watershed in the public image of the "New India". Pakistani agencies are shown as

[429] Jacob, Jimmy, 04.05.2019
[430] Jha, Subhash K., 2019
[431] Rashid, 2009, xxiii

incompetent, Pakistani treachery an essential part of the landscape. One traitor is a foul-mouthed, repulsive Pakistani official, speaking stylized effete Urdu. The others are a Pakistani civil servant and his wife, both drinking alcohol while hosting the suave terrorist, Zameer, who chats convivially to his host about a rape Zameer committed. The couple drug Zameer with truth-serum and ruthlessly extract the required information. Treachery is a dirty game, done by dirty people. However, *Phantom* 2015*, Agent Vinod* 1012, and *Pathaan* 2023, have tried to portray moral dilemmas and portray Pakistanis as whistleblowers rather than "traitors", but whatever their motivation, there is no good end possible for such people, *Pathaan* is an exception. *Uri* is based in India, so it is natural that we are able to see Indians as wholesome, family minded, fraternal and in their best environment, whereas Pakistan is portrayed at meetings of senior civil and military officials, at militant camps and in government offices. The two "social scenes" are tainted, golf stereotypes rich corrupt Pakistani rulers, while the socializing between Zameer and the treacherous couple has multiple layers of hypocrisy and debauchery.

Bellbottom 2021 is another "terrorism"/hijacking film, where Pakistan is a villain, based on flight IA-421, which Sikh separatists hijacked to Lahore after Operation Blue Star, 1984. Agent Bellbottom says flatly to the Indian PM that while Pakistan is playing "friends", "ISI is the mastermind behind the hijacking," fomenting divisions to pay back for East Pakistan, and "JKLF, Azadi Dal, MNF, are all nothing, only pawns of the ISI". This blanket denial of any legitimate grievances, refutes any need for introspection. And while it isn't a big deal for Pakistan or the ISI to kill a dozen hostages, for the Indian political party in power, it IS a big deal, with elections round the corner. As in *Uri*, a Mossad operation is cited as a role model, Bellbottom mentions India's joint military exercises with Israel, [432] highlighting the Hindutva-Zionist alliance.

Lahore Confidential 2021, is based "in Pakistan", centred around a sophisticated Pakistani Urdu poet who stereotypically turns out to be a treacherous terrorist. Like *Sarfarosh* (1999) the film highlights exoticism on the periphery of a culture of Sameness, but violently Others by Pakistani treachery. *Fighter* (2024) shows the Pakistan army fully involved with terrorism, and Pakistani viciousness and duplicity at an institutional level. It refers to Pakistan as the "occupiers" of Kashmir and themselves as

[432] As in Uri.

the real "owners". The protagonist tells his Pakistani counterpart that he is there to "take revenge for Pakistani deceit" (the horrific killing of an Indian Muslim officer).

This is the emblematic portrayal of Pakistan, fanatical religious extremism fuelling state-terrorism, with multiple levels of hypocrisy, unfettered by morals or humanity, creating fissures in the Indian polity.

Manipulator of terrorists/Kashmiri terrorists

I differentiate these films where there is an Othering of Pakistan, and an owning of the Kashmiri militant/terrorist; the vilification is of Pakistani state sponsorship of terrorism . Rapprochement is sought with the Kashmiris, a ghar *vapsi* (the return of the prodigal) of the "homegrown terrorist/Indian terrorist", but Pakistan, in the background, is the manipulator/exploiter of misguided Indians, not simply Kashmiris and other Muslims, but also Sikhs (*Bellbottom* 2021) and other disaffected groups (*Sarfarosh* 1999). However, this trope is most used in the Kashmir context .

Following hard on the heels of *Henna* (1991) which was a passionate appeal for Peace, came a film from the South Indian director Mani Ratnam. This may seem like an exception in my sampling methodology, I am looking at Hindi cinema, but *Roja* 1993, dubbed in Hindi, and released in Tamil and Hindi on the same day (Independence Day), was the top Hindi hit of 1993.[433] An important film[434], the first film in Hindi that links Pakistan to terrorism, [435] although mostly, Pakistan is not mentioned by name.

Roja shows six human locales affected by terrorism. There is the irredeemable terrorist (Waseem Khan), stereotypical, hyperbolic, fanatical, Pakistani?, and then, the reclaimable Kashmiri terrorist, Liaquat. Third, it shows the vulnerability of the young recruits to terrorism. Fourth, the military and civil establishment who practice violence in India's name, and sacrifice themselves. Fifth, it shows Roja, the young woman whose total horizon is her family and her husband, to whom "India" as a concept is not very meaningful, violence in her country has no meaning for her as long as her world is unaffected, which may represent the wider public as well as the good wives/people of

[433] Shrikant-Narayanan, imdb, 2013
[434] The cover photograph on Vasudevan's (ed) *Making Meaning in Indian Cinema* 2021 is from this film.
[435] Bharat, 2020, 7

circumscribed horizons, who allow, even facilitate, violence to continue, by ignoring it. Finally, it shows Rishikumar as the full citizen, against terrorism, working not just for the state, but for RAW, which practices violence against the terrorists, willing to sacrifice himself, rather than have his government barter a terrorist for him. Yet, he tries to reclaim the local terrorist, initially with words, although in the end he uses violence too, to escape. But his words have effect. While Waseem Khan goes back to jail, the reclaimable terrorist Liaquat, after letting Rishikumar go, is neither killed, nor captured, he simply disappears into the forest, going "to wipe people's tears," on Rishikumar's advice.

Despite being the conventional good patriot, to whom nation matters more than his own life, Rishikumar, extends his arms to embrace the reclaimable terrorist, in his battle for hearts and minds. And he wins. This is perhaps the maximum that a commercial film, whose creators subscribe to the idea of the Indian nation, could actually acknowledge that the Kashmiri insurrection needed to be looked at less violently and more dispassionately by their government. Liaquat is presented as thoughtful, considerate, and calm. Still, he is a terrorist. This begs the question. This was the first film in Hindi to even assert this much. As such, mild or even partisan as it may seem, it is a marker in Indian cinema.

Nevertheless, Pakistan is given no quarter. When the Kashmiri fighters say they have undertaken a jihad against "your India" on the order of their "leaders", Rishikumar asks them, "Who are these leaders? …. From our country or a neighbouring country? The neighbouring country has turned you into puppets! When will you use your own minds!?" This is the regular trope that people who resort to terrorism are not using their minds, are not intelligent, are misguided. He argues one-to-one with Liaquat as well, who says, "Words will not solve anything. Only a Partition will." Rishikumar replies flatly, "India will never be partitioned again." Pakistan's motivations, intentions and actions, are portrayed entirely negatively. Nor is any substantial history or grievance referred to or addressed, except briefly in exceptional films, like *Fanaa* **(**2006) or *Haider* (2014). The misguided Indian terrorist is owned and embraced and invited Home. *Roja*, and other Kashmir-oriented films, attempting to embrace the Kashmiri, even offer kinship, equally require to Other the Pakistani unreservedly, not just from the Indian Self, but from Kashmir.

After Roja, it seems sacrilegious to cite *Diljale* (1996), a melodramatic masala film, with a simplistic critique of the corruption of India's minor royalties, the police, and politics.

This corrupt nexus forces the honest common man into violence. If it weren't so simplistic it would be an introspective and self-critical film. The terrorists are Indian, but have a backstory, in the end they are *en masse* "nation-loving terrorists". Their manipulator is Pakistan. The characters are all stereotypes, and the portrayal of Pakistan is through gross duplicitous caricatures.

Bharat Bhagya Vidhata 2002, is yet another film which has as its central theme the reclaimable Kashmiri terrorist being manipulated by Pakistan. The Pakistani handler is Sultan, a merciless Pakistani army officer, who despises Kashmiris for their sentimental thinking, while "we think with our heads." This is similar to the Pakistani attitude shown towards Kashmiris in *Lamhaa* (2010)[436]**,** and in *Ma Tujhe Salaam* (2002). Kashmiri militants, bolstered by Pakistanis and Afghans, take a bus-full of students hostage. Their accompanying feisty principal, is the wife of an Indian minister. One of the guards attempts to rape a student, the Principal fights him, and Shabbir, the militant commander, shoots him dead. The Principal says to Shabbir "You behaved like a good brother to that woman." She ties him a rakhee, establishing kinship, and reminding Shabbir of his sister. Then there's a love song actually focused on the terrorist! When Shabbir says, "Kashmir belongs to us!", the Principal immediately responds gently, "And you belong to us. …. Even today you are like that part of the family that has separated, but is still, without a doubt, a part of the family. Don't divide this family anymore." Shabbir's back story is shown, we understand the agony that pushed him into terrorism. His girlfriend begs the Minister, "…. save him, give him the opportunity to become a good Indian again. And seeing the mercy of the government, it's possible that other young Kashmiri men may also learn a lesson ….." At the end of the battle, after fulfilling his role as a brother to protect his *rakhee* sister, Shabbir hands over his gun, before kneeling to say the Muslim prayer for the dying Indian commando, Hameed. He presents his hands to be handcuffed to the Minister who says to him; "When the lost one comes home, he is not lost any more, Shabbir." Reconciliation with the homegrown Kashmiri terrorist, having disposed of all the foreigners.

In *Ma Tujhe Salaam* **(**2002), the Kashmiri landlord, Lala, is rapacious and pleonectic, planning to become PM of Kashmir with the help of Pakistanis who offer to start a jihad to support him, secretly planning to hang him and annex Kashmir. Pakistani duplicity is

[436] A Sanjay Dutt starrer, Dutt has also starred in Mission Kashmir, LOC Kargil.

established and the villainousness and stupidity of Kashmiri separatists. Albaksh is the naïve good villager, unthinkingly loyal to the wicked Lala, but also to India, his "motherland." Lala refers to the Pakistan army as his masters, and there is a reference to whether a wanted man is an infiltrator from Pakistan or an indigenous terrorist, from "our own soil".

In *Border Hindustan ka* (2003), a Pakistani army officer says of a Kashmiri terrorist, "He is that man to whom we have fed a hatred of India with every breath." In *The Hero* (2003), Maj. Batra says to the people gathered in a mosque, "For the sake of peace, …. please let me know if anyone comes from "*oos par*"[437] because …. the innocent people of this village should not be hurt along with those sinful people." *Yahan* **(**2005) too, attempts reconciliation with the Indian Kashmiri militant, who is not shown as a villain, but a victim of circumstance. Pakistan is named only once in the film, and referred to only three or four times. Pakistanis, without compunction, kill eight Kashmiri children, to keep up the pressure of violence, this creates anger amongst the Kashmiri militants. "Our war is with the army. It is better that it stays that way." says the local Shakeel furiously, to the Pakistanis. "You belong the other side. Kashmir belongs to me. The people here belong to me." The local Kashmiri fighters plot to separate from the Pakistani-led group.

Lamhaa (2010), starts with a written background introduction, which reads in an impartial manner,

> "…. ….. Kashmir had a choice to go either with the newly formed country of Pakistan or stay with the Dominion of India. In October 1947, the Pakistan army captured western Kashmir. …. On 26th October 1947, the Maharaja of Kashmir signed an Instrument of Accession with the government of India. The Indian troops marched in and took over Srinagar the same day."

An expurgated history, ignoring mirror image situations in Junagadh and Hyderabad (Hindu majority populations ruled over by Muslims) also taken by India with the support of the Indian army. The introduction continues, "97% of the people living in Kashmir are Muslims: some of these believe that free and fair elections have not been held. The government of India firmly maintains that all elections held in Kashmir have been

[437] across/that side/the other side

absolutely fair and conducted as per international guidelines." There is no mention of the promised referendum, of refusal to allow UN observers during elections. "The conflict in Kashmir has claimed thousands of lives, and uprooted twice as many people, primarily the Hindu Kashmiri pandits." From this it seems as if the primary victims are the Pandits, even official figures place the Kashmiri Pandit death toll at less than one tenth of the total.[438] We see toddlers shouting Allah-hu-akbar, a teacher telling children not much older, "The time for pelting the police with stones and smouldering coals is gone. …. you must go to Pakistan and get trained!" Kashmiri Pandits are shown forced out by the militants. Pakistani military officers bring trunk-loads of money for the militants, contemptuously using them as cannon fodder.

"Local terrorists" range from total misguided innocents to those who have a valid grievance, but all such grievances are reduced to micro-level motivation and understood in terms of "revenge" for personal tragedies or slights. Pakistan's motivations are extremism and fanaticism. India is secular and inclusive and welcoming, at worst committing "tragic mistakes". Few films attempt any serious history, none go very far, nor include another historical perspective. Recent films like *Uri(2019)* and *Article 370* (2023) are happy to assign all blame to pre-BJP governments, mostly for not taking a hard enough line against terrorism. Pakistan is the villainous exploiter.

Love Stories

The love stories I discuss both have an abduction theme, although they are entirely different. *Gadar* (2001) was one of the Indian cinema's biggest blockbusters,[439] its sequel, 22 years later in 2023, was also a huge success.[440] Despite its director's protestations to the contrary,[441] it is a prominent example of films hostile to Pakistan.[442] Interestingly, the word Gadar, is a Hindi pronunciation of the Urdu word Ghadder, derived from Arabic and Persian, which means rebellion, or manmade calamity. It is

[438] Jacob and Naqshbandi, 2017
[439] "Gadar", Box Office India, 2025
[440] "Gadar 2 Box Office", Bollywood Hungama, 2023
[441] Shahryar, 2016
[442] ibid

found in Hindi and Punjabi dictionaries,[443] and is an epitome of the common culture of India and Pakistan.

Gadar (2001) is based on the real tragedy of Boota Singh.[444] Singh married a Muslim girl during Partition, she was forcibly "repatriated" to Pakistan under the Abducted Persons Act(s) of 1949/Central Recovery Operation (1948–1956), which compulsorily returned abducted women to their pre-partition families.[445] Singh converted to Islam, and travelled to Lahore, with their children, to claim her. By then she had been re-married, and in court she refused to go with him, and gave up her children too, possibly under duress. Singh killed himself, and is buried in Lahore. *Shaheed-i-Muhhabat Boota Singh*, (1999) an Indian Punjabi film, adhered to the facts, making considerable effort to present Pakistan/Pakistanis positively. Boota Singh, played by the star Gurdaas Mann, was a masterful and unusually understated portrayal.[446] Sunny Deol as Tara Singh[447] in *Gadar* (2001) is the opposite, gentle and slow to be roused, but then a hurricane. From the beginning, Pakistan is shown in a dubious and then violent light, definitely the Other. "It depicts Pakistan as highly repressive, fundamentalist and full of hatred for India, and most Pakistanis as pawns in the hands of evil leaders,"[448] barring three peripheral characters. The Pakistani family, including the mother, employ Machiavellian techniques and violence against their daughter, her husband and child. The three Pakistani women are all negative characters.[449] The film establishes Sameness and kinship, but in spite of this, and the hasty reconciliation at the end, anti-Pakistan tropes are grandly depicted in this film, violence, villainy, duplicity, incompetence. For many, *Gadar* is a well-loved for its poignant love story, and the character of Tara Singh, the India-Pakistan animosity is simply considered as a warring-parents trope.[450]

The beginning narration; "….India was divided into two parts. The *Other* (italics mine) part became Pakistan." The Pakistan flag fills the screen, the sound effects are menacing; a loudspeaker announces; "All Hindus are informed that this evening a train will be

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[443] Google Hindi dictionary
Punjabi-English dictionary, dic.learnpunjabi.org
The Ghadar Movement and the Ghadar Party were well-known, there was a journal by this name, etc
[444] Other films also use this story, including *Partition (2007)*
[445] Chawla, 2023
[446] Mukhopadhyay, D, 2018, 60
[447] Amongst Sikhs, Tara is a male name
[448] Banaji, 2008, 162
[449] Sakina's mother, the village woman, and Gullu's wife
[450] Banaji, 2008

leaving ….” Tara’s father says, it had been decided that Hindis and Sikhs living in Pakistan would be allowed to stay, now why was the Pakistan government was deceiving them, and asking them to leave? We are confronted by Pakistani deception rather than facilitation of people fleeing violence. The narration continues, “…. lakhs of Hindu families in their own land lost their homes…..” The narrator does not say “people”, or “Hindus and Muslims”, or “Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs”, he only says “Hindus”. Tara and his family are Sikhs. In *Gadar* (2001), Hindus and Sikhs are interchangeable. This film was made in 2001, Operation Blue Star and the 1984 riots had by then massacred and Othered the Sikhs. To equate Hindus and Sikhs without comment is disingenuous. The one-sided narration continues, “…. from different parts of Pakistan, trains full of the corpses of Hindus and Sikhs were sent to India.” An eerily silent train draws into Amritsar, the waiting families find every passenger slaughtered. The narrator continues, “In the different areas of India, Hindus and Sikhs retaliated.” Sikh/Hindu violence is “retaliation” throughout, as in other films.[451] Boota Singh had militantly protected the Muslims of his village, and escorted them to refugee camps. In *Gadar*, Tara’s massacred family is on the train, he becomes a “retaliator”. Suddenly he recognizes Sakina, who had once done him a gentle kindness, being chased by a mob. Tara battles the mob, saves her, and comes to adore her. He tries to find her family; it seems they have been killed. She too falls in love, they marry. Initially Others, they Embrace, and become kin. They have a son and are happy, when she discovers that her family is in Pakistan, and rapturously arranges to visit them. By collusion between her powerful father, Ashraf, and the Pakistani government and administration – so this is not individual duplicity, but systemic - she alone crosses the border, expecting her family to follow. Her waiting father remembers, “My son was taken from me on this land, this land is not ours, nor this country, nor these people. Our land, our people, and our country are Pakistan!” It is Ashraf doing the Othering here. In Lahore, she is appalled to be publicly introduced as a “daughter of Pakistan”, who was enslaved and tortured by a Sikh. She objects, but her mother insists that that she must forget her husband and son. Sakina is physically prevented from leaving, her family has political ambitions for her and themselves, through her marriage. Tara and Jeetu arrive, flanked by Indian Muslim Darmiyan and Pakistani childhood friend Gullu, and stop Sakina being forcibly married off.

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[451] Discussed in Paternalism below. *Earth 1947* (1999) and *Gold* (2018) are exceptions.

In *Gadar*'s signature scene, Tara, Sakina and Jeetu are brought before a crowd of thousands, with police, army, menacing looking cannons etc. Publicly Tara accepts Islam, says "Long Live Pakistan", but when Ashraf demands he say, "Death to Hindustan", Tara roars a refusal, and shouts, "Long live India!", under the shadow of the Pakistan flag. The crowd attacks him. In an in/famous scene, Tara uproots a handpump and singlehandedly fells hundreds. After the standard "chases", Pakistanis throwing bombs/hand grenades, destroying other Pakistanis, and injuring the child, the Pakistanis discuss amongst themselves how were they to know that "200 of our bravest men would be like eunuchs in front of that man?" Rahman, of the Transport Workers Union, knows Tara of old, helps him, and tells him, "…. Everyone here is not the same. If people knew the truth, every Pakistani would sympathise with you." The matter is debated all over Pakistan. One man says, "They are married and have a child, justice is on his side", another promptly refutes him. These few sentences are an effort to show some good Pakistanis. Many betrayals later, there is a long battle between Tara, Sakina, Jeetu, Darmiyan and the whole Pakistan army. Ashraf appears in a helicopter firing a sub-machine gun, and inadvertently hits Sakeena. The helicopter lands, the Pakistan army arrive and save her. She regains consciousness, they all embrace, Sakina's father asks for Tara's forgiveness and lauds his greatness. Even in this perfunctory tying up of the loose ends, the Pakistani father is paying obeisance to the Indian son-in-law. Unlike in *DPHG* (2003) where the loving Pakistani father nevertheless kills both his daughter and her lover.

Pinjar 2003, is based on the pre-partition abduction of a Hindu woman by a Muslim. Based on a story by Amrita Pritam, the film has its own deviations. Religion and politics are a backdrop for a human story, centred around the members of a Hindu family, and one main Muslim character, the rest are peripheral. Puro, a Hindu, is kidnapped by a Muslim, Rashid. The reason is a feud; Puro's relative kidnapped and raped Rashid's aunt in the previous generation, we understand this through the dialogue, not through visuals. Little is made of this cultural Sameness. Puro escapes, but her parents refuse to take her back, because she has been dishonoured. Other than the flawed character of Rashid, no positive Muslims are shown, (except one nameless secular Muslim momentarily). No major Hindu character is shown in a negative light, the worst are these loving parents who are forced by honour and tradition and fear of Muslim revenge, to abandon their daughter. Puro is forced to return to Rashid, who marries her. Her brother burns the crops of the Muslim family in revenge, and Rashid, nobly refuses to retaliate, saying that Trilok

had to avenge his sister, here there is a commonality of the shared culture and tradition. The Hindu family is positive, affectionate and loving, even if bound by honour, but the Muslim family, equally bound to avenge the dishonour of their woman, are extremely unpleasant characters. There is verbal reference to violence by Hindus against Muslims, in passing, but no visuals. The visuals of violence are inflammatory and are all of Muslims killing and raping Hindus and Sikhs. Rashid is finally redeemed by rescuing a Hindu woman during Partition violence, and offering Puro the option to return to her family. The Hindu family is redeemed by acceptance of the dishonoured Puro. And the reconciliatory end is that the Puro chooses to stay with her Muslim kidnapper-husband, Rashid, in Pakistan. *Pinjar* does show how they are all prisoners of their culture, it is Puro, who, without dramatics, breaks out of her cage.

One of Banaji's interviewees, a British-Pakistani, describes *Pinjar* as the only "neutral" film she can think of. But still "her sense of the overwhelming narrative construction of Pakistan (even in this film) as a horrible place to be and Pakistanis as generally cruel, not having compassion, tie in with many critical readings of these films." [452]

Udta Punjab 2016, an excellent film about drugs, opens in Pakistan, although it takes a moment to realize it. Three men on a dark night. As one exercises to warm himself up, we see that the back of his jacket says PAKISTAN, so this is a national-level Pakistani sportsman. That he is a discus thrower becomes obvious as he lobs a hefty disc of what we later realize are drugs, across the barbed wire of the Indo-Pakistan border, to partners in crime on the Indian side. Pakistan's sole appearance of barely a minute, even as a top-level sportsman, is a negative one.

Of four sports films involving Pakistan and India in competition, one projects solidarity and friendship (*Gold* 2018), but the other three (*Dil Bole Hadippa* 2009, *Lahore* 2010, *Bhaag Milkha bhaag* (2013), show the unpleasant Pakistanis committing fouls, in one case with fatal consequences, although none of these is a hostile film. This is sad, when reality has often been very different,[453] from the legendary friendship of hockey players Ali Dara and Dhyan Chand - and their India-Pakistan peace initiatives, many cricket

[452] Banaji, 2008, 172
[453] Vijay, 2023

friendships, to, most recently, the javelin players, Neeraj Chopra and Arshad Nadeem. The writers and directors choose not to focus on this, unlike *Gold* (2018).

In this section, I have dealt with the most prevalent hostile tropes portraying Pakistan, a simple vilification, as a military enemy, as a terrorist state, and a terrorist sponsor/manipulator, as a kidnapper, a drug smuggler and "un-sportsman", cited some of the ways and some of the films in which it is employed. These films too, may be layered, some more than others, each trope is entangled with others. The simple villainy trope uses Pakistan even when there are no Pakistan-specific characteristics, uses generalized abusive language, caricatures and attributes gratuitous villainy and treachery to Pakistan. It is *de rigueur* for every Kargil film to repeat the same allegations. The stories hagiograph the Indian army, any enemy would do. Pakistan's claim to Kashmir is never discussed in any meaningful way. Terrorism is mostly a peg for an action story, Pakistan is just the mastermind. Without going into the veracity of the claims, this is the pattern that the films establish. In romantic films, the Pakistani family are the villains, in one case, the male romantic lead is the villain, and in sports films Pakistani athletes are often villains too! At the same time, many of the films unwittingly establish sameness even they wish to establish othering.

Paternalistic or Hierarchical Superiority

The second major hostile trope in Indian Hindi film, after war and terrorism is the consistent presentation of India as peace-loving, superior, moral, mature, magnanimous, wise, restrained, forgiving, cultured, civilized, even larger in numbers and size, and at worst, retaliatory only. Hansen refers to this attitude as hierarchical.[454] Pakistan is aggressor, warmonger, communal, anti-secular, unforgiving, inferior, immature, younger-brother/son, uncultured, uncivilized, savage, and conservative. Evil at worst and immature at best. Singh refers to "Paternalistic pacifism" when referring to an attitude that denies Pakistan "its validity as a separate nation."[455] Sometimes this can be considered as lessons of moral behaviour for Indians as well, the lesson is always given

[454] For Hansen (2006), even when the Other is shown as neutral, there are always views of superiority and inferiority, thus hierarchy. Resende, 5
[455] Singh, 2008, 126.

by an Indian, except in the few instances discussed.[456] For this reason I have analysed it as a hostile rather than a sincerely pacifist trope. The Indians have the potential of teaching the Other, by example or by *bhashan*[457] *(*sermonising/preaching*)*. The trope presents a Self which is tolerant of the Other, the primary presentation of the Other is not necessarily as a villain, but there is clear Othering through Superiority. *Lahore* 2010, incidents in *Gadar* (2001), *War Chhod Na Yaar* (2013), and *Road to Sangam* **(**2013) follow this pattern, many films have it as a minor trope.

In *Border* 1997, the Indian army evacuates a burning village bombarded by the Pakistan army. One man seems reluctant to leave, so an officer asks him what precious thing is left behind. The man says it is his late father's Quran. The officer dives into the blazing house and brings out the Quran, kisses the book in the traditional manner and hands it to the man who thanks him, questioningly, "You are a Hindu, yet you kiss my book?" to which the officer replies, "I am a Hindu, that is WHY I kiss your book. Because the Hindu faith embraces all faiths." It is Pakistani bombardment that is killing the villagers and burning the Quran. Kazmi too cites this particular scene to illustrate his point,[458] but there is no shortage of such illustrations. The Indian officer is giving expression to the tolerance and respectfulness of the civilized Hindu. In this day and age, perhaps an attitude that one should be grateful for, nevertheless, while it sets a bar for how Indians should deal with their Other, it also is setting the example for those being Othered. The Othering is clear, as is the paternalistic effort at inclusivity, and hopefully a moral lesson for the majority too. In a conversation between officers, one says to the other, "Pakistan will fire the first bullet. We will fire the last," establishing Pakistan as the aggressor; India had already entered Pakistani territory in Bengal, this assertion is disingenuous.

In *Sarfarosh* 1999, Ajay says India has been willing "to rise above this trauma, to forgive and forget, but you and your companions, manage to create a new ruckus (*b-kheda*), and rub salt in the wounds again!" Gulfam replies that "we" will continue to do so, will send weapons that will rain death and destructions so that generations of Indians should never forget the violence and the wounds "inflicted upon our nation/community (qaum)". Ajay retorts that bullets do not ask a person's religion, they kill Muslims too, and Muslims are

[456] Discussed later in this section.
[457] lecture/speech/sermon
[458] Kazmi, 1998, 13

maligned because of such actions. “All your talk of nation and community is a pretence…..!” In *Gadar* **(**2001), India is shown as forgiving, Pakistan is the opposite; when Ashraf accuses Tara’s people of having butchered his son, Tara retorts that his whole family was killed, but that he had forgotten that hatred, and he advises Ashraf to do the same. Ashraf replies that far from forgetting his hatred, he would like to shoot every Indian.

Sarfarosh (1999) also makes much of the contempt in which powerful (but “uncultured”) sections of Pakistani society hold Art and artists. The Pakistani poet Gulfam is hugely loved in India, clearly establishing a common culture. But the film constantly reiterates how Pakistan disrespects even classical singers, and has no real appreciation of Art, through the words of Pakistani establishment figures. Another officer says, “…. soldiers are not sacrificed to save singers.”

Hindustan ki kasam **(**1999) is a film that disavows hostility, but the paternalism, with good Pakistanis being adulatory followers of India, is blatant. In the film, the Pakistani PM gives a speech, in Pakistan, saying that the Pakistani narrative of India being our mortal enemy, dreaming of our destruction, has no foundation; it has made Pakistanis vicious, preferring to fill their coffers with weapons rather than grain. Pakistanis do not prepare for Eid with such enthusiasm as they do for war, and they teach their children hatred. “In fact”, India is a democracy, where the Indian government never interferes in the religious affairs of the Muslim minority, where the sincerity of the non-Muslims is evident; the Indian PM opens his fast with other *rozedars* in Ramzan. Whereas in Pakistan, “we make a blood bath between issues of Shia and Sunni”. He suggests that the matter of Kashmir be settled in the same way as Pakistan accepted the borders of Punjab and Rajasthan (*where the demographic is entirely different*). “Insha’Allah, the day that India and Pakistan become friends, these two countries can become a great force in the world. But this is exactly what the outside world does not want. They give us weapons to fight each other ….” These words put in the mouth of the Pakistani PM in the film, by the Indian director, are like a propaganda bulletin for the Indian government. Any Pakistani PM saying this would not last the day. As this Pakistani PM is about to fly to India, his officials suggest that flying in such a small plane is unsuited to his dignity. He

replies that if the Indian PM can come to Pakistan in a bus [459] then surely the Pakistani PM can travel in a small plane. "A good leader saves his country's money," he says. Clearly India setting a good example for Pakistan!

In *Refugee* 2000, Indian Raghuveer says to Pakistani Ashraf, "…. It is our tradition…. That when a son becomes adult …. we give him a separate house. But you people have not been at peace even after getting your own house…. ". Here India is not just as the older brother, but the parent, an elder, but the kinship is present. But the Pakistani challenges the Indian, " If people allowed one to be at peace, then….. [but] you literally broke one of our arms, which is called Bangladesh now?" In *Pukar* (2000), the Indian officer is more direct, "It is our decency that we do not cross the Line of Control. The day we shout "Victory to Mother India", and come over, we will beat you to smithereens. You fight from inside a *burqa*![460] Declare war and fight like men! In seven days …..we will erase every trace of your country from the face of this earth!" And in *Border* (2001) the Indian Muslim Darmiyan says, "…. a Father is after all the father and the son is a son. A son comes out of his father. Pakistan has come out of India." Despite the hostile Othering, the sameness of kinship is expressed even in this paternalistic sentence.

In *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata* (2002), Hameed, a crack Indian commando accuses the Kashmiri terrorist and his backers of greed and violence, "… but now enough is enough. The patience of India is exhausted. …. " India is depicted as patient and long suffering, compelled to display its military superiority. In the same film, the Minister says to a Kashmiri militant, "Who are you? A fistful of insects and bugs? Who we can crush and throw into the dust whenever we wish. It is our decency and humanity that constrains us. …. If we were to forget this, we would pull out from the roots, the foundations of your "patron" country." (uplifting music in the background). This is not just asserting military or physical superiority but also Decency and Humanity as moral superiority (through dehumanizing language). The Minister says to the Pakistani officer, "*Arre*, the whole of your country's population is smaller than the population of our army! …. there are 100

[459] Indian PM Vajpayee travelled on the Lahore-Delhi bus, on its inaugural journey to Lahore in February 1999

[460] The burqa is the veil plus an enveloping garment

crore Indians![461] Stop baiting us, otherwise …. (we) will decimate your country…. not let a single trace remain." So, if nothing else, superiority in numbers.

In *Ma Tujhe Salaam* (2002), a group of soldiers hear the news that 10 soldiers in Srinagar have been killed by terrorists. Daler, immediately equating terrorists with Pakistan, says, Pakistan has no desire for peace, "We should finish them in one go - !". His senior officer admonishes him, "Even if we wished to we couldn't do this, Capt. Daler Singh. We follow the Live and Let Live policy. We have never been the aggressor, nor will we ever be." Pratap says, "The whole world knows …. who has been the aggressor. Where these terrorists are nurtured, where they are trained ….. Do THEY care about the international community? …." In *LOC-Kargil* (2003), the senior officer reminds his unit, "Orders are that at no point of time will we cross the Line of Control." (Indians are strictly law abiding). When Indians soldiers are kicking a dead Pakistani soldier, they are chastised by their officer, who says, "This is also someone's son…..A soldier gives respect to another soldier…..They are human beings." A distraught Indian soldier replies, "These people are not human beings!", but the officer simply barks, "It's an order!" Later an Indian soldier asks his officer, "What to do about the Pakistani bodies, Sir?" And the reply is, "Give them a decent burial according to Muslim rites." In *Zameen* 2003, the Indian Colonel says to the terrorist leader, "You are still alive because our government has restrained us. The day war is announced we will get inside and kill you there….[and] your impotent army." The Indian Defence Minister says, "…. people mistake our fortitude for weakness. ….we do not wish to bomb their cities and kill innocent people. We wish to uproot the tree of hatred that they have grown. And for the last 56 years, this has been our effort."

In *Border Hindustan ka* 2003, the Indian family is tolerant and welcoming, the Pakistani father, ala *Gadar* 2001, ambitious and narrow minded. When Pakistani Nargis and Indian Raj decide to get married, she wants to elope. But Raj says he will bring her from her father's house honourably and respectably. But when Nargis tells her father that in India she has learnt the lessons of love and understanding, he gives her a slap. However this film does show the prospective Pakistani fiancé as an artist. When an Indian army unit is having a quiet cup of tea at the border, and is attacked by Pakistan, an officer says, "….

[461] Here, India's population is being used as a positive. Often, Muslims are blamed for the rising population

the enemy is forcing us to pick up our weapons. They are compelling us to take steps that will destroy them."

In *The Hero* (2003), a poem is read by an Indian, very much in the traditional folk style, one expects it to be an old universalist poem, but it says:

> He who makes one mistake is an ignoramus
> He who makes two mistakes is a devil
> He who makes mistake upon mistake is Pakistan
> And he who forgives every mistake is our Hindustan.

Some of these examples may be considered as indicative of secularism or friendship or generosity, but when looked at in the context of the whole film, they express a patronizing paternalism, asserting India's superiority.

The film *1971* (2007), also refers to India "generosity" in repatriating 93,000 West Pakistani prisoners, this is in the context that Pakistan is illegally detaining a number of unreported Indian POWs.

War Chhod Na Yaar (2013), like *Lahore* **(**2010), seems to have the raison d'etre of establishing commonalities, yet both are obviously and it seems, unconsciously, paternalistic. *Lahore* **(**2010), commercially a "disaster," received generally positive reviews.[462] . Indian critics criticized the Pakistan Censor Board for banning a "reconciliatory" film,[463] seeming oblivious to its blind paternalism and sanctimoniousness, similar to *War Chhod Na Yaar* (2013), and the short film *Verses of War* (2020). *Lahore* (2010) is about kickboxing. The Pakistanis are painted too black to be redeemed even by their about-face in the end. India's moral superiority is exemplary, and Pakistan's only saving grace is that they learn the lesson being taught. Given the very one-sided yet "controversial" premise of the film, that the Pakistani sportsman commits a deliberate and fatal foul, the only thing that could have justified such a partisan premise would have been if it had been based on fact. But this is simply a remake of an American film, *Best of the Best* (1989). Of the nine Indian characters in the film, eight are particularly pleasant characters. Of the four Pakistani characters, only the Pakistani

[462] "Lahore is a sensible and gripping film that has the audience cheering and clapping." Times of India 2016. Bhattacharya, 2010
[463] ibid

woman, Ida, is portrayed positively, two of the characters are actively malicious. Ultimately, Indian Verender simply cannot strike the final blow to destroy Pakistani Noor, even to avenge his brother's death, and consequently loses the bout. Verender's family are relieved and happy, clearly the moral victory is India's. At the award ceremony, Noor addresses Verender and gives a monologue beginning with, "…. today I've understood that a nation's authentic victory is what YOU have won….." He puts his medal around Verender's neck, the other Pakistani players do the same. Not only has India taught the Pakistanis a crucial moral lesson, they are also told that due to their moral/sportsmanlike behaviour, they have "… truly won the hearts of Lahore."

In *War Chhod Na Yaar* (2013), the scenes where Indian and Pakistani soldiers are playing cards across the barbed wire of the border, are meant to establish commonalities. The senior Pakistani is not a drinker, but the junior Pakistani not only makes a request for a bottle, but also for *paan*. The Indians make no requests. An anti-war statement from a Pakistani soldier says, "If wars keep on happening, our country will disappear off the globe!" After this line, we immediately we see the Indian flag! Differences are highlighted in a way meant to be comic, but which deteriorate into ridicule, like the supposed Pakistani obsession with meat. When the Indian officer is asked if there should be a war, he replies " No. and certainly not with them. These people don't even get enough to eat, and we want to kill them with bullets? I would like to invite these *poor chaps* to a feast of chicken." The Indian officer, says "We are Indians by faith after all. If they do not fire, we will not fire." Again, portraying India as never the aggressor.

In *Uri* 2019, at a meeting of the senior-most officials, one states, "In the history of India, we have never attacked any country first. And Pakistan has been taking advantage of our nature from the beginning." (The Pakistani interpretation is different, obviously). When the terrorist camp is attacked, a trembling young fourteen-year-old is shown with a machine gun in his hand trying to muster up the courage to use the weapon. The protagonist, instead of shooting him, gently disarms him, demonstrating the magnanimity of the courageous, civilized Indian army, no unnecessary killing even by the New India.

However, there are a small number of exceptions, in which this paternalism is reversed, and a Pakistani displays more maturity or presents a better character, Rishi Kapoor's *Ao ab laut challen* (1999) where the Pakistani Sardar is generous, hospitable and sensible, and in *Lashtam Pashtam* (2018), in *Dil bole hadippa* (2009), *Total Siyyapa* (2014) more

comedically, where Pakistan establishes itself as "the elder by a day"! *Gold* (2018) where Imtiaz takes the lead in greeting Hukum Singh, and also where Tapan follows Imtiaz's lead and just says "Ditto" in answer to the journalist's question. In *Indoo ki jawani* (2020), Samar, the Pakistani, is definitely the most mature character in the whole film, this created a backlash.[464].

India is also seen as giving charity to duplicitous Pakistan. *Pukar* (2000), *Gadar* (2001), *Zameen* (2003), *Bhuj* (2021) refer to Pakistan as a beggar to whom India "gave charity" of 650-750 million, "….Farewell tears and 750 million) we put in their hand as they left. They bought explosives and weapons with that money and used it against us. No other country in the world paid such a heavy price for their decency." This "charity" refers to Pakistan's share in the agreement negotiated by the Partition Council of the departing British, which India initially refused to honour, after the 1947 Kashir conflict, and which was eventually given perhaps partly because of Gandhiji's intervention. *Zameen* (2003) states that Pakistan's very existence was "given to them as charity", expressing deeply held beliefs about Pakistan as undeserving, and its existence as unjustifiable, no matter what the negotiations or agreements, Pakistan could never be legal or legitimate, and thus no agreement made or promises given needed to be heeded or honoured.

These are profit-oriented commercial Indian movies, it would be naïve to expect selfless introspective self-criticism from them, where one finds that, it is a bonus. A certain amount of paternalism can only be expected as in the *Tiger* series (2012, 2017, 2023), *Welcome 2 Karachi* (2015) *Pathaan* (2023), *Ram Sethu* (2022), but most of the films discussed above cite superiority with as much emphasis on Pakistani inferiority. In commercial Indian film, there is a natural expectation that an Indian will be a most important character, the protagonist, every cinema tradition follows this pattern. But it is when this expectation is over-exceeded, accompanied by a consistent reiteration of inferiority and vilification that it makes it into this category.

[464] See 165 reviews and comments on imdb site for the film. "Indoo ki Jawani: User reviews." 2025.

Denying Othering, Weaponizing sameness, Pakistani expansionism and Muhajirs

This trope weaponizes sameness, by refusing to recognize Pakistan's and Pakistanis' agency or right to be different/independent. It is a negative denial of othering, not an embrace. From the powerful, it is a belittling denial of the Other's grievances or concerns. It owns the Other in an aggressive way, denying the Other an identity. It is a suffocating inclusion. It is the context that differentiates between this suffocating embrace and a Embrace of Friendship and Peace. Indian films hold the power to portray the Pakistani and direct the narrative and use that power to negate issues that Pakistan perceives as valid, and to exclude a Pakistani point of view. An off-shoot of this trope is that when the film asserts that we are all one, then the division of this One into the Self and Others is blamed on someone, the British, Jinnah, the Congress…. blaming the British is best, because then neither Indians nor Pakistanis are offended. Again, whether this is a shallow blame-game, or a serious claim, is clarified by the context. Through a variety of arguments, the creation of Pakistan is "Unjustified", dismissing Muslim concerns, presenting the voicing of these concerns as a communal mentality, a denial of a common humanity, of highlighting difference, of evidence of vested interests. As a best option, such a trope considers it just to treat the minority and majority communities on par, and exhorts Muslims to prove their loyalty, it "blames the victim" and also denies Pakistan's legitimacy.

In the opening of *Gadar* (2001), as the Hindus are forced to flee, Tara's good Muslim friend, Gullu, comes in, the weeping girls cling to him and he begs the family not to leave, he will protect them like a son. But the father says that all heartfelt emotions have been defeated, conveying that the emotions of the people are not in favour of Pakistan. Later, the station master in Amritsar says, "These bloody English they've just ruined us, they split us into pieces. ….. Son, who can survive this flood of blood? The bloody British have eaten up India."

In *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata* (2002), Shabbir (the "terrorist") tries to "turn" Hameed, the Loyal Muslim Indian army officer, telling him that India is not really Hameed's country, Pakistan is, if he is a true Muslim. Enraged, Hameed says, hyperbolically, that India is the land where Islam is believed in the heart, ….where the Muslim was born (sic), where the war for Urdu fought, where there is religious education. (?) "It is this mine and thine

that has created the division between Hindus and Muslims. How many more fissures will you create? First you scoundrels wanted Pakistan. Now Kashmir! Tomorrow you'll be asking for Delhi. (A c*oveting India/expansionist trope*) Your impure desires know no limits. …..Who asked you to create Pakistan? *Arre*, you should have stayed here, together with us, as our brothers, as our own, then all this mine and thine, it would have been Ours." The belligerence of this Sameness, and the denial of any legitimate concerns is obvious, as well as this exaggerated lauding of India's tolerance of her Muslims, and hyperbolic claims. This "expansionist Pakistan" trope is also occasionally found as in *Gadar*, Sakina's army bridegroom shouts, "We've got half of Kashmir, one day the whole of India will be ours!" and also in *Hindustan ki kasam* (1999). In reality this is neither a Pakistani ambition, not a mindset, it is simply an Indian film trope to establish Pakistan's aggressive nature.

In *1971* (2007), one Indian officer jokingly asks another, why when Pakistan has Punjabis, as does India, when Pakistan has Sindhis, as does India, when Pakistan has Muslims, as does India, then what is the need for Pakistan? Thus challenging the very basis of Pakistan in a ridiculing way so the film is not simply accusing Pakistanis of criminal and inhuman flouting of international law, but questioning Pakistan's existence. *Kalank* (2019) too, shows the demand for Pakistan simply in terms of personal scores and concerns.

Road to Sangam 2009 is a critique of Indian Muslims, purportedly in "their own" voice, where the minority affirms its responsibility for the treatment meted out to them, a textbook case of blaming the victim. Expressed most cogently, "Hindus have always been altruistic, sacrificing, tolerant and accommodative, it is the flawed Muslim mindset that needs to be blamed."[465] The film reminds both Hindus and Muslims that Gandhiji died to defend Muslims. And that the Muslim community has no appreciation of this fact. A generally positive review in the Hindustan Times says,

> "Rai (the director) does however subsume himself in the noble intentions to make larger points on the politics of Liaquat, Jinnah, and the creation of Pakistan. Several moments border on self-indulgence. ….. It is noteworthy [that] Pakistani star, Javed Sheikh, play(s) a part in a picture that questions the creation of

[465] Kazmi, 1998, 13

> Pakistan itself: a fact, if reversed in history, the filmmaker suggests, could save us Rs 11 lakh crore spent so far on defending borders alone. The position is debatable." [466]

Friedman had asked, "Who or what groups are represented? Who is doing the representing, …. who is in charge of the portrayal? …. Who has historically been in charge of the portrayal ….? What is the intended audience?"[467] So it is equally noteworthy that there is not a single significant Indian Muslim in any significant role in the cast or crew,[468] the senior Pakistani actor Javed Shiekh, is in a very minor role, for no reason other than tokenism. The absence of Indian Muslims in the film, which has a unique and original story, conveys its own message. Jinnah's portrait is prominent in a ("bad") Muslim leader's house, virtually impossible, even audience comments say how highly unlikely this is. Most Indian Muslims consider that Jinnah betrayed them, but even more relevant, they cannot risk charges of treachery that this would undoubtedly attract.

Actor Paresh Rawal, a member of the BJP, and an elected member of the Lok Sabha in 2014, plays Hashmat, his powerful performance presents a dubious mixture of garbled fact, fiction and figures questioning the legitimacy of Pakistan.

"Have you ever thought that if ….Muslims had not gone to Pakistan, …. if this country had not been partitioned, then it would have been the world's most powerful country…. the largest number of Muslims would have been in this country – …. all the money that is spent on the military, more than 100 lakh crore, would have been saved….. all this money could have been spent on education, medicines, hospitals, ….Partition was not a partition of the country, it was a partition of the Muslims. ….. Ask Jinnah Sahib, without eliciting the opinion of 80 per cent of the Muslims,[469] how could he make Pakistan for only 20 per cent of the people? And then, more than 20 million people were killed in this partition. Because the poor Muslim could not go to Pakistan, how could he go? …. we should say that for the death of these poor Muslims, …. these political and rich Muslims are responsible. (*No blame is assigned to the people who actually did the killings, presumably they were only "retaliating"*.) And who needed Pakistan? ….

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[466] Shekhar, 2010
[467] Friedman, 2009, viii
[468] One or two lesser known Muslim actors have extremely minor roles.
[469] There was no adult franchise. Only 3 and 13 percent of the Indian population voted in the 1946 elections for the provincial and central assemblies respectively . Sajjad, 2014, 221-222

Jinnah, not wanting Waziristan to become a part of Pakistan, was fighting with the British. (*???*) And on top of all this, he made a declaration, he signed an affidavit in court, under oath, that "I am not a true Muslim" [470]…. so that his property could be inherited by his daughter and her children, and not be confiscated (as evacuee property) ….."

> Kasuri: And what about the political powers here? Who have made our lives hell? Have they no responsibility?
>
> Hashmat: I am not denying that, Kasuri Sahib. (He may not be denying it, but he is certainly letting them off lightly, not holding them particularly culpable, in fact the onus is totally on the minority community). I am ready to try and explain to them too, that this tension between these two communities is not going to be of benefit to anyone. …. The benefit is to Pakistan, to the US, to China. ….

Muhajirs ("Refugees")

Divisions within Pakistani society are emphasized as part of the trope of questioning Pakistan's legitimacy, and one much-used tool is the position of the Muhajirs (Muslim refugees from India) in Pakistan, although Biharis and Hindus have also been mentioned. *Sarfarosh* 1999, and *The Hero* 2003 make much of the "discrimination and hatred" against the "Muhajirs". There has been some discrimination and even persecution of Muhajirs at times, that this discrimination arose as a reaction to the perceived privileged position that the "muhajir" elites enjoyed in Pakistan, specially in the early years, - their privileged access to evacuee property, their "superior" language, and therefore their ease of access to employment, compared to the "locals" - is completely ignored. This trope refers entirely baselessly to how "Pakistanis" don't like to sit and eat with "muhajirs", which is rooted more in the ways in which discrimination is expressed in India rather than in Pakistan.

These films harp on this word as if it is a racist slur, that is inaccurate, and expresses a limited and inverse understanding of the connotation of the word, which has its root in the Arabic word "*Hijrat*", refering to the journey of the Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in search of asylum, and implies people who have been cast out for their

[470] These claims are inaccurate.

beliefs, so it carries a certain honour, as a political refugee might. The Islamic year is calculated according to the year of the Hijrat. Rather than negative connotations, the word has some sacred connotations. Muhajirs use this word to identify themselves as a community and their most powerful political party is named the Muhajir *Qaumi* (National) Movement.

Sarfarosh 1999 repeats this word *ad infinitum*. In *The Hero* 2003, an embittered Pakistani informer, Kareemudin, says that Pakistanis would not give 2 yards of land for a Muhajir's grave, a nonsense. In *Kya Dilli, kya Lahore* **(**2014), the word "Muhajir" is used as an abuse. In *Shershaah* **(**2021) too, the point is picked up and worked to death. It is also raised in *Aaya Toofaan* (1999), as well as *Welcome 2 Karachi* (2015). Clearly such cracks and fissures in Pakistani society are exploited, in a mirror image of what Pakistan is accused of doing with the Sikhs, the Adivasis, the Kashmiris, the Naxals, the Assamese.

Refugee concentrates more accurately on the plight of the Biharis, a community that Pakistan abandoned in Bangladesh. Trying to cross illegally into Pakistan, one of the Biharis says; " ….when we set foot on that *pak* (pure) land, my weariness will go away. Tomorrow we will be among our own people." He and his wife are later killed by the Pakistan border police, this is the typical trope of the disingenuous Muslim meeting the reality of the violent Pakistani state. Later, another Bihari, Manzoor is accused of being from Bangladesh. With tears of rage in his eyes, he confronts the Pakistani officer, and argues his community's case.

India and Pakistan consistently exaggerate and exploit divisions and in each other's societies at every level, from military subversion to foreign policy, and in India's case, in film. In Pakistan's case, the issue of the Muhajirs, Biharis and Shia's are some of the most obvious ones to exploit, and this is clearly what has been done in the films mentioned above., somewhat clumsily. In Indian film, Pakistan is shown doing the same, exploiting fault lines, with Muslims, Adivasis, with Khalistanis, and other disaffected minorities, as in many Indian films, as in *Sarfarosh* (1999), *Tango Charlie* (2005), *Baby* (2015), *Belbottom* (2021) .

Conclusion

After looking at the Self through Introspective tropes in the previous chapter, this second of the empirical chapters, looked at both the simplistic and the slightly more "sophisticated" ways in which Hindi cinema presents Pakistan as a hostile Other. Even here sameness pervades, so that Othering must be clearly established, yet sometimes it becomes more important to wrench Pakistan away from the Kashmiri, or the Indian Muslim, in order for the Indian Self to establish sameness with them.

Hostility towards Pakistan and Pakistanis is expected. It is not just the popular default assumption, it is what the literature and popular writing prepare us for. When *Ek tha Tiger* (2012) was being filmed in Dublin, it was "leaked" as being about RAW and ISI. Indians and Pakistanis in Dublin signed a petition against the film, expecting it to be the "usual" jingoistic portrayals[471]– it was not. Even every "hostile film" does not present a simple straightforward hostility, or a monolithic portrayal of Pakistan, many – although not all - portrayals are layered, and even in the midst of "hostile films", there are unexpected sympathetic tropes that militate against a simplistic vilification.

One may expect war films to be an example of the hostile films, but even they are not uniform. An active hostility – a straight forward portrayal of Pakistan as villain is the most common, but there are some films where individual Pakistani soldiers are the honourable enemy – doing their duty but not personally evil people – sometimes even an admirable one.

Even such rare portrayals disappeared with the terrorism genre, terrorism is easily more negative than war – the choice of the word pre-supposes it. From the 90s onwards, terrorism films were predominant.[472] There is no Good Terrorist in contemporary discourse.[473] And no discussion in Indian film discourse of "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter."[474] There is no concept of fighting for self-determination against the Oneness of the Indian Self, or of India as "hegemonic". An occasional film like the bold *Dil se* (1998) even can only hint at it. But even in terrorism films, there is some thoughtful effort at some differentiation. Occasionally, the backstory of a terrorist

[471] I signed the petition
[472] Bharat, 2020, 9
[473] Lessing, 1985
[474] Beydoun, 2021

gives the viewer a sense of their history, their grievance, which led them to take a road – which they may turn back from. Of course they cannot be "good" remaining in revolt, but occasionally they may be welcomed back as the returned prodigal. *Dil se* (1998) deals with India's internal issues in a poetic tone, interspersed with stark reality. The "insurgents" and their leadership are presented respectfully as adversaries, the film includes the extreme violence (including rape) by the state forces that motivates individual "terrorists". Initially, the protagonist has the conventional status quo view, appropriate for the character, gradually he is drawn into a state of confusion and a desire for escape. His choices too, are limited, and there is a sense of horror and even a disjuncted responsibility at what the state forces inflict.

Miscellaneous stories unnecessarily portray the Pakistanis in a negative light, does this reflect the views of those making the film, or do they consider that this will help success at the box office? There seems no other reason for this. *Pinjar* (2003) too, often considered a neutral story, in my analysis is a negative portrayal. In *Gadar* (2001), the warring parents theme is augmented and enhanced by Pakistan in the story. The inclusion of Pakistan adds an extra frisson of emotion to the narrative, and the presentation of Pakistan as anything other than negative could be risky.

The Paternalism trope where India is presented as superior leader, and Pakistan is exhorted to be less communal, less greedy, less filled with hatred, ancient India, has attained its maturity and tolerance. This leads on to a denial of any valid grievance from the "tolerated", which then leads on to further blame. Pakistan's society is rife with division, but Hindi cinema lazily picks up on one or two and run with those *ad infinitum*. And ways of discrimination and dreams of Pakistani expansion reflects more of the patterns of Indian polity and society than Pakistan's.

This chapter thereby shows Othering, even in its generally presumed default option of hostility, is complicated by is complicated by Sameness. Before we move on to less considered aspects of Othering, where an acceptance of Othering may allow or precede the possibility of overcoming it, we will look at those tropes which do not fit naturally into either hostility nor acceptance, which I have designated as the Ambiguous tropes, but which are an essential part of the portrayal of Pakistan in Indian cinema, and so, of this continuum of tropes.

Chapter 5 – Ambiguous Tropes.

After discussing the hostile tropes in the previous chapter, and before discussing the conciliatory or more positive tropes, this chapter will discuss the tropes which I consider to be ambiguous and subjective, that is they can be viewed both positively and negatively depending on the viewer's positionality. The identification of such tropes as ambiguous is a product of this study and an essential part of the detailed elaboration of the different portrayals of Pakistan and Pakistanis in this thesis.

Ambiguous tropes are those tropes which are more subjective, can be understood anywhere on a spectrum from hostile to conciliatory, and this depends totally on the subjective values and opinions of the filmmaker and the audience.

The two most important ambiguous tropes are where the film makes a point of distinguishing between the Pakistani people and the Pakistani government, and the second is the trope showcasing the loyalty of the Indian Muslims. Also tropes promoting secularism, or even non-sectarian romance/love/marriage. Exoticisation and mispronunciation are double-edged ways of Othering, and also may be unintentional. Affirming culpability and criticism of the Indian state goes hand in hand with doing the same for Pakistan, and neither should be viewed negatively.

Differentiating the Pakistani State from the Pakistani People

This is a very specific trope in Indian film. It is different to the simple presentation of a bad guy as in most of the villain films, or the friendly portrayal of ordinary Pakistanis, as Zain in *Jab tak hai jaan* (2004) or the Pakistani parents in *Sadiyaan* (2010) or even a complex character with both good and bad, as Khan in *Challia* (1960) or even the presentation in one film of one good and one bad character as in *Indoo ki jawani (*2020**).** In this trope, I am looking at those films where there is a presence of an evil Pakistan authority juxtaposed against good Pakistanis, people or individuals or groups or other authorities. Such a trope is ostensibly hostile to the Pakistan government, but not the Pakistani people.

This is done in two ways, and I will divide the following section on that basis. Firstly the use of a disclaimer or positive Pakistani characters in hostile films, and secondly, the representation of a schism within the people or between the rulers and wider society.

A disclaimer or positive Pakistani characters in hostile films

The first manifestation of this trope is where this is stated as a sentence or two in the film. Such carefully discriminated subtleties are not always be taken in by the audience, specially if they are made once, simply "for the record", almost as a mandatory disclaimer. Even in a cinema hall, audiences do not take in every word. When people watch at home, as movies are often watched now, audience attention is even more fickle, people talk, eat, leave the room. There is a general attitude which is foregrounded in a film; this is what the audience takes away from the film, rather than a memory of specific details. So these token tactics are often lip service.

The war film *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973), is a perfect example, it starts off with a disclaimer, which draws a clear distinction between the military government and the Pakistani people, to whom it refers to as "brothers" (kin) and "friends".

> "….. our fight was certainly not with the people …., the fight was with that dangerous military government ….. For the brave people of that country, we have sympathy in our hearts, and the wish for friendship."

This is stated, but the sentiment is not followed through in the film. In *Border* (1997) when a Pakistani soldier is captured on the battle field and asked for information, he replies, "I am just a very junior soldier, I do not have any useful information," differentiating between the Pakistani war-hungry senior-establishment, and the "ordinary" Pakistani soldier. In *Zameen* (2003), the Indian defence Minister says, "Someday our neighbours will have a government who will remove this blindfold of Indian enmity and see the truth."

In *Uri* 2019, after the terrorist attack, retaliatory options presented in a senior-most level meeting are War, or the breaking of the Indus Water Treaty. One minister says "If we stop their water, when the ISI is pressurized by Pakistani citizens, maybe they will stop/lessen their terrorist attacks". Another replies, "Pakistan is under the ISI. The ISI is not under Pakistan. They will let their people die of starvation, but they will never stop

funding terrorism." This is one of the clearest sentences expressing this idea. Another official says, "We have no enmity with the Pakistani people. Our war is with terrorism." This is the "standard disclaimer" sentence.

In the Pakistani meeting, there is a nexus of the ISI and the jihadis. The Pakistani PM presiding over the meeting, advises that "we should not underestimate the enemy, yet again". He is ignored, showing clearly who is clearly more powerful between the civil and military authorities.

Bellbottom 2021, a film about a hijacking, can be classified quite simply as anti-the-Pakistan-authorities, and while no "ordinary" Pakistanis are shown, yet, in the 33rd minute, the formula line, " "I do not blame the Pakistani public" is still voiced. In *Mission Majnu* 2023, R. N. Kau, head of RAW says categorically, "…. Pakistan is run, not by its government, but by its army." Although referring more to the systemic schism, it's a single clear sentence.

The next step up from such disclaimers is in films which present positive Pakistani characters, sometimes shown as a besieged or embattled right-thinking minority in an environment peopled by fanatics and warmongers.

Henna (1999) differentiates clearly between the good people, who are "most" Pakistanis, and the Pakistan state and religious establishment, which are hostile and corrupt. However, there are good people even amongst them, such as the military officer, and also not-so-good people among the general public, like Henna's brothers. *Sarfarosh,* the same year, presents no redeeming Pakistani characters but shows a disconnect between the government and the Muhajirs. *Border Hindustan ka***,** (2003) has hundreds of Pakistanis as terrorists, villainous military, and just villains, the three (and a half !) "good" people are a besieged and embattled handful, but defeat the hordes, with Indian help. In *The Hero* (2003), the Pakistan flag is thrown to the ground, and Batra catches it and holds it aloft, saying "A flag is a symbol of respect and honour for all its people. And our fight is not with the people but with the devils."[475] The Hero is fighting the Pakistani government, and distinguishing between this and the people. A tangled tale, it shows a some simple

[475] There is a lesson here for both Indians and Pakistanis, it is the Indian who is teaching it.

good Pakistanis; but the Pakistani authorities are definitely an enemy, although the enemy's daughter is an innocent "good" character, who is killed by them in the end.

Kabul Express (2006) attempts to humanize not just the ordinary Pakistani soldier, but also the Afghan Pushtoons who have a negative portrayal in India, sadly, this is done at the expense of villainizing the Hazaras (a much persecuted and victimized community). The film alleges that Pakistan army personnel participated as Talibs in the Afghan civil war, and when the Americans invaded Afghanistan after September 11, in 2001, and the Taliban were routed, the Pakistan army establishment abandoned them.[476] The Afghan, Khyber, is bitter against the Pakistanis; "See how they've changed sides, these bastard Pakistani politicians. First they made the Taliban, and now they'll help America finish off the Taliban. They are getting their own people killed." At the Pakistan Army post on the Afghan border, Pakistani soldiers listening to the radio, hear Pakistan denying that it ever supported the Taliban. According to the film, Pakistani Taliban, once fostered by their government, were abandoned and left to the Afghans and the Americans to finish off, sacrificed for American dollars. A Pakistani officer orders the border sealed, by order of the "High Command". When the soldiers protest that "our people are still coming across," he asserts that there is not a single Pakistani in Afghanistan. The soldiers swear at him under their breath. Finally, with the help of two Indians, the Pakistani soldier Imran, is in sight of the army post,

Pakistani officer	Why the hell is this man making straight for our post?
Soldier 1	It could be that he's one of us, sir
Pakistani officer	How many times am I to tell you that none of our people is there!
(A warning volley is fired. Imran waves his identification and shouts that he is from the Frontier guards.)	
Soldier	Sir, he is one of our men
Officer	None of our men is in Afghanistan!

Ordered, the soldiers shoot and kill him. His ID and pack of Indian cigarettes flow away in the stream into which he falls. This shows the complete disregard of Pakistani "rulers"

[476] The words Talib, Taliban and Mujahideen are loosely and interchangeably used, although the Taliban and the Mujahideen were/are two separate groupings, occasionally overlapping, sometimes in bitter opposition. Interestingly, there's little or no Pushto in the film, even most of the Pushtoons talk to each other in Dari, a variant of Farsi, the language of the much-maligned Hazaras, often used as a lingua franca between different ethnic/linguistic groups, and also considered sometimes as the language of the elite. Many Afghans are bilingual.

for their own soldiers, and that his Indian travel-companions-by-chance had more regard for his life than his own government did.

War Chhod Na Yaar (2013), a "war comedy", is a film confused with many tropes. Clearly anti-war, desirous of establishing sameness, it fits best into a paternalistic trope. The film highlights that the soldiers on both sides have many commonalities and gain no benefit from the war, and that the interests of the people and the authorities are in conflict with each other, in both Pakistan and India. The Indian authorities are represented by a silly politician, but the presentation of the Pakistani authorities is a stereotypical caricature of a gross, villainous and incompetent general and his flunkeys, in league with evil and incompetent Chinese.

Baby (2015) is a top secret extra-official Indian intelligence unit. While the film is an "obvious" action-terrorism story, gratuitously violent, the portrayal of Pakistan is cleverly expressed. For Pakistan, "The enemy" is equally India and the US. The terrorist dialogue is cogent and logical, not simply fanatical and spurious. Initially, the baddies are clearly and specifically the ISI and the terrorists, mostly associated with the Lashkar. They are getting not just sanctuary in Pakistan, but unfettered ability to further their terrorist designs, simultaneously, the Pakistan government is shown cooperating with the US, pursuing a two-faced policy. The finale takes place in a Middle-Eastern location, at a grand meeting of terrorists. The local agent of Baby is Ashfaque, [477] a "deep asset", never actually identified as a Pakistani, but that's what he is (in real life, he is a Pakistani actor), he is goodlooking, attractive and smart, straightforward and positive. If he is a Pakistani, is this is a "positive" portrayal, and is he a traitor? The clever young detective investigating Bilal's murder, also could be either Indian or Pakistani, but is probably Pakistani. This actor is also Pakistani, as is Rahman.[478], the villain. Ashfaque and the detective both help the Indians against the terrorists. Director Neeraj Pandey said, ""*Baby* is not an anti-Pakistan film. In fact, it has three Pakistani actors who play very important roles. See, some elements in Pakistan can be wrong but a whole nation cannot be wrong.

[477] A Pakistani character judging by his accent and attire, played by Pakistani actor Mikaal Zulfiqar. The Week, 20.03.2019

[478] Hani Mohammed, played by Pakistani actor Hassan Noman, s/o Rasheed Naz who plays Rahman

Terrorism has no religion, and we believe that religion and country are two different things."[479]

In August 2015, *Phantom* was released, It is wishful thinking about revenge for 26/11, an attack that few could condone or defend. Pakistan provides shelter to some perpetrators and masterminds of the attack. The mission is to assassinate these people (in a "Mossad-style-operation"). *Phantom* begins with the real terrorist attack of 26/11 in Mumbai in 2008, which lasted for 3 days. It flashbacks to a Pakistani terrorist being caught and ruthlessly beaten by Indian authorities to extract information. Officers voice frustration at the "wimpish" and legalistic attitude of the Indian government. This serves the dual purpose of showing the restraint of the Indian government on the one hand, and the passions of individual officers on the other. Twice too, the comment is made, that these officers want to behave in the cowboy fashion that Americans do. Initially Pakistan is not mentioned. Then suddenly it's all about Pakistan. The theme that Pakistanis are, as much and more, victims of fundamentalist terrorism as anyone else, runs throughout the film, and is explicitly stated a number of times. The protection given to the terrorists by the Pakistan government is a major strand of the story, but in a brief glimpse of a Pakistani ambassador, one can also read the reluctance of the Pakistani civil bureaucracy to engage with this "terrorism business".

The story has the compulsory car chases and coincidences, and somewhat sanitized random violence. Some real names are used, Kasab, David Headley, Lashkar-i-Tayyaba which claimed responsibility. Some are slightly changed, but identifiable, a notorious American contracting firm is referred to as Dark Water. There is reference to Indian spies obtaining visas as aid-workers, collusion by Pakistani fishermen, and Pakistani terrorists doing recces on Indian cricket-visas, sadly, all this fuels existing paranoia. Amina Bibi, a Pakistani who is "persuaded" to help the Indians is the middle-aged mother of a young man who was recruited by the Lashkar to fight in Afghanistan, from where bits of his body are returned in a plastic bag. This reiterates that Pakistanis who cooperate with India do not do so from base motives, they are not traitors, but patriotic Pakistanis, who cooperate with the Indians to fight the common enemy, terrorism. Pakistani children,

[479] Anwer, 2015.

victims of terrorism and brainwashing, are shown injured in a terrorist attack. This trope of the Pakistani "traitors", motivated for the common good, who work with the Indians is present in *The Hero* (2003), *Agent Vinod* 2012, *Baby* (2015), and *Pathan* (2023). Most Pakistanis who "help" the Indians, conveniently die during the story, leaving no problematic loose ends. Although Amina is the main Pakistani character who is fleshed out in the film, most of the action takes place in Pakistan, and there are a number of interesting Pakistani characters. An interesting strand prevents it from being a simple jingoistic revenge drama, that the main protagonist is an Indian Muslim, mistakenly dishonourably discharged from the Indian army, *possibly* because of anti-Muslim prejudice? This is unstated, but is an elephant in the room. For him too, the only solution is to die. There are no patriotic monologues, just a few sentences, and our dead hero is honoured posthumously in a moving rather than melodramatic salute.

Systemic Schism

Hindustan ki kasam (1999), is complicated and clunky, at odds with its more discriminating political message, which is that even if civilian Pakistani governments wish for peace, sections of the Pakistan army create war. This is not simply distinguishing between government and people, but between the military power and civil government. In elaborating this civil-military schism, the Pakistani PM is shown as an admirer of India, ready to make peace – but a section of the army, presented in a exaggeratedly caricaturish portrayal, wants war and terror. As Indian military families celebrate a ceasefire, a wicked Pakistani officer gives the order to attack, a "good" Pakistani officer objects, saying that to attack during a ceasefire is against the rules of war, he is overruled. Pakistani tanks fire at the celebration. A fleeing mother picks up one child, an aunt the other. A Pakistani officer kills the aunt with a machine gun, and takes the child, who is then re-named Tauheed, and brought up as a killing machine, on stories about how the Indians killed his family, and raped his mother. The Indian twin becomes a soft spoken writer. There is no logic to the Pakistan army kidnapping an Indian toddler, this is not explained. The logic of the film is that the twin backstory allows for weaving in and out of multiple identities as well as underlining the kinship. A Pakistani officer rages, "The Indian PM has extended the hand of friendship to our PM. …. the way to [stop] this is to kill the Pakistani PM on Indian land! … our PM goes to India so that hatred may be

turned into Love!. …. Nonsense! He is obsessed that he should be remembered as the angel of peace, as Gandhi is. …. They made Bangladesh secede, but we will not give up Kashmir! …. Can you forget Tauheed, what those Indian soldiers did to your mother in 1971?"

Except for one small sentence, the Pakistani army are rapacious, corrupt and treacherous, even to their own, or mechanistic and blind followers of a indoctrinated nationalism, they train terrorists, use children as killing machines, do not abide by the rules of war. Barring the treacherous few who misguide the unthinking masses, the Indians are noble and heroic, even when they torture their own innocent citizens, it is for the greater good of India.

Movies take time to make, but if we remember the confusion surrounding Kargil, it seems prophetic. But Kargil began in May1999 and the movie released in July 1999, it must have been ready at least a few months before. Certainly the PM in the film looks like Nawaz Sharrif. The plot of a peace-making Pakistani PM being killed on Indian soil by a belligerent Pakistani army (faction) is used again in *Ulajh* (2024), and the plot of a Pakistani rogue faction assassinating a peace-minded Pakistani Prime-Minister is also used in *Tiger 3* (2023). In *Hindustan ki kasam* (1999), the Pakistani PM is so sycophantic towards India that it is hard to take him seriously, all other significant Pakistani characters are violent caricatures, which they also are in *Ulajh*, but the Pakistani PM is more credible, Tiger 3 has a woman Pakistani PM, and many Pakistanis on the "good" side.

Deewar (2004) and *1971* (2007) are both based on the alleged case of Indian military POWs captured in the 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pakistan wars, who have not been reported//acknowledged by the Pakistan government. So the entire environment is of an unjust, illegal, unethical Pakistan, particularly the Pakistan military which is enforcing this imprisonment, flouting the Geneva convention, Despite this, significant Pakistanis characters are presented positively, even military ones. In *1971*, there is acknowledgment that the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan has made efforts to investigate these unacknowledged POWs.[480] Both films also portray a vast difference between the vicious ISI and the professional Pakistan army, portrayed by in *Deewar* by Maj Ejaz and Maj. Qureshi respectively. While Ejaz enjoys cruelty, whipping the prisoners himself, denying

[480] This is based on fact.

them water, Qureshi gives them water, and advice not to antagonize Ejaz. Qureshi is helpless and powerless, and subservient to the junior Ejaz of the ISI. When Ejaz has beaten a prisoner to death, and the rest are being transferred, Qureshi salutes the Indian officer, Maj. Kaul to say farewell; Kaul reciprocates, establishing both professional and personal respect between two armies, and two people, but also to produce the contrast from the ISI man. In *1971,* Maj. Mallick, played by script-writer Piyush Mishra,[481] is an honourable, intelligent, loyal Pakistani officer with a conscience and compassion. This isn't just showing a differentiation between government and people, or civil and military but even between different branches of the military.

Ab Tumhare havale watan saathiyo (2004) weaves dizzyingly in and out of hostility and reconciliation, and representation of the Pakistani authorities. It shows the usual Pakistani villains in government but also redeemed Pakistanis, converted to goodness; even the Pakistan government having a change of heart by the end. Made with the help and cooperation of the Indian military, the film is "dedicated to Indo-Pak friendship". It got neither critical approval nor box office success, the moralizing is just too simplistic, obvious and preachy, and the Indian army too hagiographed. Initially, Pakistanis are villainous, particularly the Pakistan army. The film begins with the slaughter of Bengalis by the Pakistan army in 1971. A single Pakistani soldier refuses, and is promptly shot by his commanding officer, Sikander. "So to save Muslim brothers and sisters, Hindustan had to take steps." [482] The film has the usual heroism, sacrifice and success on the part of the Indians. It is the Indians who conquer Cox's bazaar for the Bengali freedom fighters, (galling for Bangladeshis) where Pakistani officer Sikander is saved from Indian Gen. Amarjeet's bullet by the timely announcement of the Pakistani surrender. Later, soldier-poet Col. Rajeev is captured by Col. Ashfaq of the Pakistani army, who beats and tortures and cheats; nevertheless Rajeev says, "Ashfaq Khan is a patriot. To obtain secret information he subjected me to many different kinds of torture. .... they could not break me, ….. there were some people, who crossed the limits of cruelty and used Indian prisoners for chemical experiments. (While he is reminiscing, the visuals are of Pakistani soldiers gratuitously beating him). I spent two years in this pain and torment," chained

[481] Piyush Mishra portrayed a similar character in *Deewar* 2004. He also acted a Pakistani in *Happy bhag jayegi* 2016, presumably for his command over Urdu (the classical Indian variety). Actor Mukesh Rishi has also acted as a Pakistani in multiple roles, although his Urdu accent is erratic.

[482] This is a heavily loaded sentence, worthy of being unpacked by a study of the portrayals of Indian secularism.

and fettered with a metal ring about his neck. A religious Pakistani sergeant helps him escape.

Rajeev	For this love and kindness, I will always remember Pakistan. Thank you.
Sergeant	There is no need for thanks. I have simply tried to pour some water on this fire of hatred that is in too many hearts.

Rajeev kisses his hand and they both say *Khuda Hafiz*.[483] Meeting years later, Ashfaq and Rajeev greet each other respectfully and professionally. Indians meet Pakistanis to discuss the security of the Amarnath pilgrimage in Kashmir, Amarjeet asserts that "for the sake of peace and humanity we will knock at your door not once but a dozen times. [This] is a very holy pilgrimage. Let religion stay out of our current tensions." Sikander hypocritically agrees, and self-righteously points out how Pakistan facilitates Sikhs from all over the world for the Nankana Sahib pilgrimage. Amarjeet proposes to Sikander that India and Pakistan cooperate to fight terrorism. Ashfaq's son joins Pakistan-sponsored terrorists and is killed. This converts Ashfaq against terrorism. In a conversation between Pakistani officials, they all agree that the people, the international community, and the Pakistan government all want peace and development; that Pakistan no longer wants to support terrorism but instead to cooperate with India to exterminate terrorism. They warn Sikander that if there is any attack on the pilgrims, he will be suspected. Sikander dissembles, "…. Where the government told us to go, we went. Otherwise who wants this bloodshed? I am a peace loving man. …. Pakistan should also send a peace delegation to the Pilgrimage." (Ashfaq looks at him in amazement). A journalist at the Pilgrimage says, "…. the *yatra* used to be held amid fears of terrorist attacks. But this year a Pakistani delegation has also joined in. Now that they are here, there is no need to be afraid of terrorists anymore." This implication is clear. Sikander, part of the delegation, secretly plans a massive explosion, and uses a child to plant the RDX. The villains are killed by a joint effort, Amarjeet apologises to Ashfaq, who was wounded in the process, Ashfaq replies, "No sir, in these steps towards friendship these wounds are of no importance." Col. Rajeev recites; "We will not be shattered by bickerings, You are my

[483] The traditional "Muslim" goodbye in the subcontinent, "May God be your protector".

mirror and I am yours." Indians and Pakistanis in military uniforms salute the two flags flying side by side, and instead of "The End", "The Beginning" appears on the screen.

Agent Vinod **(**2012) too, is about divisions within the Pakistan establishment, including within the ISI, and shows terrorism as a rogue element. The film begins in a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, with a cruel set of jailors including Pakistani officer, Col Huzaifa. The prisoner, Vinod, and his companions escape with panache, followed by lots of action in lots of countries chasing terrorists who are linked with the Russian mafia and Lashkar-i-Tayyaba[484], during which Vinod meets Iram, a Pakistani ISI agent. The RAW Chief is Hassan Nawaz (Loyal Muslim trope, discussed below); he phones the ISI Chief, and tells him that David Kazan has just purchased a nuclear bomb;

Gen. Iftikhar (ISI)	You'll have to share your source with me! Because if there's the slightest truth in this, then we need to cooperate.
Hasan Nawaz (RAW)	Tell me straight, General. Are you involved?
Iftikhar (ISI)	I had absolutely no idea. If I had had the slightest idea, I would have let you know.
Hasan Nawaz (RAW)	Iftikhar Sahib. Whatever the problem between us, this is not the solution.
Iftikhar (ISI)	I agree with you….. I'll get back to you.

This ISI Chief, unaware of what his own people were up to, is shot dead by Col. Huzaifa. Iram reported to General Iftikhar, now Iram and Vinod collaborate. But they are caught, and when Col. Huzaifa interrogates Iram, "Who do you work for?" She replies, "Pakistan. I work for Pakistan. Who do YOU work for?" She accuses Huzaifa, "You are a traitor. That is why Iftikhar Sahib never trusted you. I am sure you had a hand in his death.". Huzaifa prepares to shoot Vinod, but they escape. In Delhi, they meet the Pakistan ambassador.

Iram	I have seen Col. Huzaifa give orders for the bomb!
Pak ambassador	You keep your mouth shut, young lady, you're being a traitor to your country and pointing the finger at someone else!

[484] "Lashkar-i-Tayyaba-e-Taiba is internationally banned, but the (Pakistan) government has done little to crack down on it. It is considered responsible for the Mumbai 2008 attacks, that killed 166 people…." "Agent Vinod banned from Pakistani cinemas." DAWN, March 26, 2012.

Vinod	If this bomb explodes in Delhi, there will be nuclear war. We will respond in 20 minutes. Lahore, Islamabad, Karachi will be destroyed. More than 60 lakh people in both countries will die. You are saying that Pakistan is not involved in this, this is the time to prove it.

As a "confidence building measure", Hassan Nawaz, the RAW Chief, gives the Pakistan ambassador a tour of the RAW offices, saying that he could be court martialled for this. "On the other hand, I could save many lives,". He pleads with the ambassador "in the name of all the mothers in our countries to find out what is happening- "…. there must be someone in Pakistan, in the army, in the ISI, in the embassy, who does know. Please!" The Pakistan ambassador reciprocates with information about a Lashkar safehouse in Delhi. In the ensuing action, Iram dies; Vinod defuses the bomb.

Like *Mission Kashmir* (2000), *Fanaa* (2006) and *Pathan* **(**2023), *Agent Vinod* (2012) bends over backwards to not accuse Pakistan, (even the ISI), of terrorism, it places the blame squarely on "other people", an international business conglomerate, not even linked to Islam, other international leaders, rogue elements in Pakistan, and a touch of a fine Chinese hand. Banned in Pakistan as a hostile film, the Dawn review speculates, "…. likely because of its critical portrayal of the country's generals and spies. They are shown providing support for the Taliban in Afghanistan and scheming to set off a nuclear suitcase bomb in India's capital….. The film, which was scheduled to open last week in Lahore and Karachi, likely hit too close to home because it echoes real criticism of Pakistan, admittedly in the exaggerated style of India's popular Bollywood film industry.…… The Indian film shows Pakistani officials encouraging terrorist attacks in India and financing Lashkar-i-Tayyaba..."[485]

Although used as a honey trap a number of times, Iram will not sleep with her target, the Colonel accepts this, the film preserves "the honour" of the Pakistani girl. Iram is a principled agent, refusing even to kill a criminal without due process, she works for the greater good which she understands is also in the best interests of her country. The film also shows two "good" senior Pakistanis, General Iftikhar and the Pakistani ambassador in Delhi, cooperating with India to prevent nuclear war. The corrupt extremist Col. Huzaifa, who is training the Taliban, and his cohorts, are rogue elements. The film shows

[485] ibid

two tendencies in Pakistan, within the government and the military, and even within the ISI. Saif Ali Khan's (co-producer and lead actor) comment was, ""Agent Vinod is for Indians, but it is not against Pakistanis." The Dawn review continues, to say that Pakistan should support films …. that explore controversial issues rather than seek to block them. "They may be the only tools at the disposal of Pakistani society to stem the rising tide of hate, religious intolerance and ethnic differentiation."[486]

I end this section with two films. First *Pathaan* **(**2023), Shahrukh's Khan's iconic comeback film and the biggest Bollywood blockbuster of all time, till *Jawan*, his next film, the same year.[487] Khan made 3 films in 2023 as part of his comeback, each tackling a mega Indian nodus. *Pathaan* was the first, and is relevant to the commonalities of India-Pakistan, this choice illustrates the importance of these issues for India.[488] That Shahrukh Khan was willing, even while trying to make a comeback, to risk a film with a message that India and Pakistan have common interests and need to collaborate for the greater good, and that extremist terrorism must be fought by both together, is testimony to the importance of this issue. This film has been analysed by thousands to decipher all the subversive messages in it, but this overt message is unabashed.

The eponymous Pathaan is an Indian orphan with no idea of his antecedents. Severely injured as he saved the children in a small Afghan village from a missile targeting their school, the village people make him an honorary Pathaan. A maverick star of Indian intelligence, once badly wounded, he was considered a has-been. The Pakistani secret agent, Rubai, is played by Deepika Padukone, one of THE top Indian actresses, presented in a sexy avatar, a honey trap, and a hard drinker. She had joined the ISI to serve her country. But, as in *Agent Vinod*, she is horrified by that faction that supports terrorism, now through a horrific biological weapon, and decides that her patriotic duty is to destroy this. She decides to cooperate with Pathaan, an Indian agent, because together they will make a more successful team. She is not a traitor but a patriot, who believes that Pakistan's ideals are being betrayed by people like General Quadir. General Quadir considers India's abrogation of Article 370 as a declaration of war. "The time for diplomacy is over. If we wait upon UN resolutions then India's next step will be towards

[486] ibid
[487] Madhukalya, 2023
[488] J*awan* is about internal Indian issues, and *Dunki* is about illegal Indian immigration to the UK.

our Azad Kashmir. …. The time has come to make friends with the Devil himself." He contacts "Jim", in a remote mountain fortress, saying the time has come to bring India to its knees. Jim is ex-RAW, gone rogue after his pregnant wife was horribly killed by Somali terrorists when the Indian government refused to pay them ransom. Jim has set up "Outfit X", a commercial terrorist corporation, to which ideological organizations like Daesh, Boko Haram and Aleph now outsource their terrorism.

After the usual twists and turns of such a blockbuster, Pathaan rescues Rubai from torture, apologizing, "I'm sorry, Rubai. But fear sometimes blinds people." Rubai replies, "But …. I am not your enemy."

Pathaan, Rubai and comrades infiltrate Jim's headquarters. Some repartee calculated to inflame the ISI, is in this section;

> Jim Too bad, general. Another of your agents has fallen in love with an Indian agent. First Zoya and Tiger and now……Honestly, do you run offices for ISI or a dating agency for Indian agents?

Gen Quadir is killed by Rubai. Pathaan deactivate the weapon, normality is restored, for the moment, and defiantly, Pathaan and Rubai go off together…..

2023 began with *Pathaan* and ended with *Tiger-3,* again an ISI-RAW collaboration to save the Pakistani peace-inclined Prime-Minister from a powerful extremist rogue-Pakistani faction. As the rogues hijack Pakistan's Independence Day celebrations, Tiger says, "The celebration is not Pakistan's, it is the celebration of a few unhinged jihadis." *Tiger-3* is at pains to show substantive Pakistani collaboration, but it is hard to escape the paternalism of the super-hero, Tiger.

The above films establish Pakistan is not a monolithic evil entity. This is on a sliding scale, some do this through a sentence, others portray ordinary Pakistanis as decent reasonable people, some caught in circumstances beyond their control. Often the Pakistan army or the ISI are villainized, but even here, all army and ISI personnel are not evil, an intelligence agency is after all, a patriotic wing of The Nation, as is RAW, and this genre of films shows the struggle within Pakistani power structures, between extremist "jihadi" elements and peace-inclined patriots. An interesting aspect is that the protagonists in these films have an Indian male and a Pakistani female character, it is hard to get away from the connotations of this traditional gender pairing even when the Pakistani Prime

minister is a woman, or many of the ISI good-guys are men, as in *Tiger-3*, such is male star power in Hindi cinema. So while these films make an effort, sometimes a very huge effort, not to be hostile to Pakistan; to show internal power struggles within Pakistan, or even that Pakistan is ruled by a power hostile to its own people, and presents courageous and patriotic Pakistanis, the villainous Pakistanis are also a very important part of the story.

Loyal Indian Muslim (LIM)

This trope is regularly counterposed both to highlight the contrasting nonsecular/ parochial/ bigoted/narrow-minded Pakistani, and to present the loyal Muslims of secular India. Has the shelf life of this trope expired, given the plight of Muslims in India under the current dispensation and for the last 10 years? The sub-text in movies like *Pathaan* (2023) may have started to give this a new expression. Even the most simplistic movies might have to present a slightly more complex statement, or else none at all. *Fighter* (2024) has two prominent Muslim characters, that is enough, no more needs to be said, but it is. The protagonist is almost certainly a Muslim by his name, and nothing more is said, but the other Loyal Indian Muslim is typically brutally killed by the Pakistanis. After almost 80 years of independent India, Muslims still have to be seen to affirm their loyalty to India, despite Shahrukh Khan[489], and despite Kanhaiya Kumar[490] asserting that Love (of the nation) is not for exhibition.[491]

In *Fiza* (2000), more than 50 years after Partition;

Politician	….. Now look, the Mughals oppressed us, occupied our land, we forgave them. You people went and established a separate country of your own over there, we don't bear you any grudge…..
Fiza	(Fiza is young woman in her mid-twenties) Don't say "you people", Singh Sahib. Those who made Pakistan, they have gone there. And those who didn't go, are mostly dead. There is no one

[489] Dutt, 6.12.2015 (video format)
[490] "India's most loved and loathed student", "a political star", a match for Narendra Modi, (Biswas, 2016), "Red Star over India", (Sengupta 2016) and Kumar 2016
[491] Filmy Dunya. 2022

> left in this country, who participated in the making of Pakistan. We are as much Indian as you are.

This is the first and only mention of Pakistan in Khalid Mohammad's *Fiza* (2000), which starts with the Mumbai riots of 1993, in which Fiza's brother, Aman, disappears. In an almost three-hour-long film, this short sentence comes after 45 minutes. Fiza puts Pakistan in its place both for the wily politician trying to use it, as well as for the young people of her generation.

But this is not the tone in Hindi cinema, where this trope is still being used even in 2024. In *Fighter* (2024) the two Loyal Indian Muslims are not only counterposed to the separatist/ extremist/ villainous/ disloyal/ narrow-minded Indian Muslim but also to every Pakistani (who must be Muslims of the same ilk). The religion of the protagonist Loyal Indian Muslim character is never mentioned, for the other it is prominently displayed. They are there to demonstrate clearly that it is not Islam or Muslims who are Others to Indians, it is the Pakistani, the matter is not religion but nationality. This is central to the narrative of a secular Indian identity. The Indian Muslim is embraced, the Pakistani is Othered. Uncomplicatedly, in films of various genres, the Loyal Indian Muslim's loyalty to the nation state is above every other loyalty, as should be every Indian's. It is the Indian Muslim rejecting the Pakistani embrace, and establishing themself as another means to Other Pakistan. This setting up of the Othering between two kinds of Muslims, the Pakistani and the Indian Muslim, creates an Othering of the Indian Muslim as well, which Hindi cinema seems oblivious to.

This Loyal Indian Muslim is dispensable, almost always he is killed by Pakistan, this highlights to Indian Muslims that Pakistan is their enemy, and to Indian majoritarian Hindus, the loyalty and sacrifice of Indian Muslims. It often seems that the Loyal Indian Muslim exists in such films simply to avow his patriotism and then to be killed by Pakistan. Apart from killing Indian Muslims, Pakistan is often shown making efforts to incite the Loyal Indian Muslim against India, or entice them towards Pakistan, such efforts are greeted with contempt by the Loyal Indian Muslim. Such portrayals may be done with laudable motives, but this trope is so frequent and so predictable as to have become a stereotype/caricature now. To some extent, this can often be conflated with secularism, but it is a distinctive trope and I have examined it as such.

Upkar (1967) shows Pakistani bombs destroying a mosque as well as a mandir, mentioned also in the lyrics of the song playing. In *Prem Pujari* (1970) the Pakistan army try to incite the Indian Muslims, and are told off by a Muslim villager who says Jamia Masjid is filled with Indian Muslims praying for India's victory. The first person who is introduced in *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973) is an Indian Muslim officer, he eventually dies a martyrs death at the hands of the Pakistanis. In *Aakraman* (1975) Pakistanis try to co-opt an Indian Muslim officer, who replies that a soldier has only one religion, his love for his country, and even impresses the Pakistanis who are trying to "turn" him, who wish they had more officers as loyal to Pakistan as this man is to India. This Muslim officer is killed in battle by the Pakistan army. In *Hindustan ki kasam* (1999), conversations between the Pakistani terrorist Tauheed and his Loyal Indian Muslim girlfriend Roshanara highlight that Pakistan is as willing to sacrifice Indian Muslim lives, as Hindu lives. Roshanara is also killed as a Loyal Indian Muslim, as she tussles with Tauheed over a gun. In *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata (2002)*, Pakistan-sponsored terrorists try to "turn" the Indian Muslim commando, Hameed, who roundly tells them off, in the end he shoots the Pakistani, but gets shot himself, by a Pakistani, and his last words are "Mission accomplished, sir, Jai Hind." The film embraces the Indian Muslim and exhibits how Pakistan is Othering them, by killing them.

In *Border Hindustan ka* (2003) Loyal Indian Muslim Subedar Mushtaq is killed by the Pakistanis, when he gives his life to save his officer. Abdul Bhai is a Muslim who chose to stay in India in 1947, and raises the Indian flag at an Independence Day event; as he is extolling the Indian government line, he is shot by a Pakistani. In *Sarfarosh* (1999), when Gulfam talks about the violence inflicted on his "qaum" (nation/community) at/before Partition, Ajay responds, " What nonsense you're talking, Gulfam! Which qaum, and which nation and which people are you talking about? If you are talking about the Muslims, there are more Muslims in India than there are in Pakistan!" This exact sentence is reiterated in a number of films, In *Gadar* **(**2001), Tara Singh proudly tells Ashraf, "There are more Muslims in India than in Pakistan ! And their lips and the beating of their hearts always say Long live India! So are they not devout Muslims?" In *Mission Kashmir* (2000) even an international Islamic terrorist leader says that their reason for concentrating on India rather than on Pakistan is that there are more Muslims in India than in Pakistan. Even through the words of a terrorist, this is obviously considered an important fact to emphasize.

In *Refugee* **(**2000), Ata and Jan Muhhamad are brothers, one in Pakistan, one in India. Supported by a Pakistani terrorist leader, Ata comes back to his ancestral village in India, where "nine out of ten people are Muslims".[492] They hand out guns to the Muslim villagers to fight the Indian army. His brother Jan Muhhammad, the village *Mukhia,* and Loyal Indian Muslim, tells the villagers to refuse and says to his brother,

Jan Mohhammad	You've gone mad, to try and spill blood on this land where your ancestors are part of the very earth.
Ata	The whole village is on our side. Don't be a fool.
Jan Muhhammad	You have the gall to do this because you think that everyone in this village is a Muslim, but this is your biggest mistake! Inside every Muslim in this village beats an Indian heart and that heart loves this land! He can give his life for this land and also take life for this land. Even if the life is that of a Pakistani brother! So get out of this village, off my land, and out of my country!

Gul Hameed,[493] the Pakistani terrorist, orders Ata to shoot his Loyal Indian Muslim brother Jan Muhhamad, which Ata finally does. So the Pakistani Muslim even kills his Indian brother. Under the protection of the Indian army, Jan Muhhamad's wife and foster-son, Refugee, enter the village, to retrieve his body, with the mother leading them (again showing a positive portrayal of a Muslim woman). Refugee says to the Muslim villagers, "…. If you have any love for this soil, of which your ancestors bodies are a part, then drop these weapons ….!" One by one the villagers drop their weapons and join Refugee. In a frenzy, Gul Hameed says to Ata, "….they're changing sides ….. we were going to win the war with their support …. they're deserting us?"

In *Ma Tujhe Salaam* (2002), in an army camp, there is much excitement when a parcel arrives for the (Muslim) officer, Irshad, which everyone presumes are sweets, but when opened, it's a box of soil, with a letter from Irshad's mother saying that he has two mothers, herself and his motherland. Irshad and his comrades anoint their foreheads with this soil, as she had suggested, as Iqbal's *Saare jahan se achha* plays in the background, they salute the flag, melodramatically patriotic, via the Muslim officer, his mother and her prayers. Irshad, is of course, killed by the Pakistanis. Enter Albaksh, a one-man-army and Loyal Indian Muslim. "…. Indian blood runs in my veins. As long as there is breath

[492] Unlikely, such villages would most likely have been in Pakistan
[493] Probably a play on the name of General Hameed Gul who was DG ISI from 1987 to 1989

in this body, the enemy cannot take away one speck of the dust of Kashmir." When a group of Pakistanis are captured, they are handed over to Captain Arshad Khan, another Loyal Indian Muslim. But it is Albaksh who is a caricature of the Loyal Indian Muslim. Simple, innocent, rural, exploited and misguided, (by more rapacious Muslims), he is never equal to the protagonist.

Albaksh	We have to save the villagers and the country.
Maj Pratap	You look after the village, I will protect the border.
Albaksh	(says to Lala -The wicked-landlord-treacherous-Muslim)
	You ask for Kashmir, and we will rip you apart
	You joined with the Pakistanis to turn this land impure.

In *Border Hindustan ka*, (2003), a number of Indian soldiers are killed in an attack, one of the surviving Muslims shouts "You cowards! Show yourselves if you have the guts!" as he weeps, calling the names of his dead comrades, of whom one at least is also a Muslim. Later, an Indian soldier with a Muslim name is asked by the Pakistanis if he is a Muslim? He replies with one word, "Hindustani." In *1971* (2004), Subedar Ahmed is the Loyal Indian Muslim, Kabir may or may not be a Muslim, a Sikh and a Christian complete the picture of multicultural India. The Muslim sacrifices himself to facilitate the escape of his comrades. As a Muslim, proficient in Urdu, he was able to spy on the Pakistanis. Among the many predictable cliches in *Stumped* (2003), is Khan, the Muslim army officer, praying for India to win the cricket, countering the common allegation that Indian Muslims cheer for Pakistan in a Pakistan-India match. In *The Hero* (2003), Capt. Idrees is harsher on Kashmiri co-religionists than the non-Muslim officers. Idrees is killed by Muslims, and dies saluting Jai Hind. In *Deewar* (2004), the Indian prisoners are regularly beaten, but a special animosity is reserved for the Indian Muslims. In *Sarhad Paar* (2006), the Pakistani Bakhtawar, says to the Indian army officer Hanif, "Hanif, you belong to my religion. Why are you siding with these people?" Hanif replies, "If you are able to tell me what religion you belong to, then I am ready to be on your side. A handful of people like you have given my religion a bad name." In *Tango Charlie* (2005), in Kargil, the Indian bomb-defuser is Havaldar Rasul, who is killed by a Pakistani bullet.

In *D-Day* (2013), there are three Muslims in the RAW spy team in Pakistan. In *Holiday* **(**2013), Viraat tells a story is of an Loyal Indian Muslim soldier called Ashraf , who is captured by "the enemy", tortured in ways that Viraat describes in graphic detail, and then killed. His family was weeping and wailing, Viraat says, but on the 10th day, his

brother joined the Indian army. In *Baby* (2015), too, there are "good Muslims". They are duped, courted, and trained by terrorists, and some, horrified, become informers, Aftab is one such student. The Head of the covert unit, Baby, is also an Loyal Indian Muslim, Firoz Ali Khan. In *Naam Shabana* (2017) the eponymous role is of an Loyal Indian Muslim who works for RAW. *Uri* (2019) has the token Muslim soldiers in the Indian army shown saying their prayers before battle, and Akram is the token Loyal Indian Muslim at senior level.

The Indian-Muslim is the easiest sacrifice in order to display the callousness of the Pakistanis, in *Pukar* (2000), it is Colonel Hussain, in *Phantom* (2015), even the protagonist, Daanish, is sacrificed, in *Bhuj* (2021) it is the handicapped Muslim woman's caring Hindu husband, in *Fighter* (2024), it is Basheer. Good Pakistanis too are more disposable , in *Calendar Girls* (2015) it is Nazneen, in *Henna* (1999), the eponymous Henna, in *Refugee* (2000) it is the Bihari refugees, Asghar and his wife. In *Kya Dilli kya Lahore* (2014) too, Rehmat, the Pakistani, dies, but this time at Indian hands, expressing the very different take of this film.

The purpose of this trope is to clearly demonstrate that it is nationality not religion that is the differentiating characteristic, it establishes Pakistanis as communal-minded, and Indians as secular and above communalism. This is as much for an Indian audience on behalf of the Muslims, as it is to establish their secular superiority over Pakistani intolerance. It establishes the Othering between Pakistanis and Indian Muslims in the most extreme way, and asserts the Indian-Muslim's ownership and embrace of India. It expresses that although good Indians embrace each other, it is Pakistan which persists in communal minded thinking, and holds Pakistan responsible for it's own Othering.

Secularism

This is not an exhaustive list of references for secularism in the movies under discussion. I cite only certain references which particularly highlight the tolerant nature of India, and embrace within the film the Indian Muslim, (but very clearly not the Pakistani) where this is done particularly in the general context of either Othering Pakistan or exposing Pakistan's intolerance/narrowmindedness. Even when it is in the context of Othering

Pakistan, a display of secularism cannot be put down as a negative gesture, at most it can be considered ambiguous.

Hindustan ki kasam **(**1973) shows India and Pakistan at war in 1971, but tries to highlight how Muslims and Islam are part of India's fabric. The Hindu mechanic has a son, who longs to fight the enemy, so Raj Kumar recites him a poem, "written by a Muslim poet", based on the Mahabharat story. A song with the same words follows. Refugee is a Muslim who visits a Hindu shrine, which is very common, and similarly, in *Ma Tujhe Salaam* (2002) when the Muslim Albaksh, unites with the oppressed tenants of the treacherous Muslim landlord, they put a tilak on his forehead and pour holy water on his head. In another scene we hear an *azaan* (Muslim call to prayer) echoing over the snow clad mountains. The enemy is clearly not Islam or Muslims.

Albaksh says to the army officer, Pratap, "*Sahib ji*. Our religions may be different, but our country is the same. As long as we trust each other and each fulfil our own responsibilities, no enemy can even lift his eyes to covet our country." Major Pratap replies, "The faith of Muslims such as you is the pride of Hindustan, Albaksh." Later, in a big shoot out, Albaksh raises the "*Nara-i-taqbeer*……" as a war cry, and all the Indian soldiers give the response, "*Allahu akbar*!" Vande Matram, an iconic patriotic song[494] is interspersed with "*Allahu akbar*", a testament to Indian-secularism. A wounded Maj. Pratap is prayed for in mosque and mandir alike. This is very different to *Border* (1997) where the whole battalion worships at a Hindu temple before going to war, and there is no significant Muslim.

In *Border Hindustan ka*, (2003), when Subedar Mushtaq is killed by the Pakistanis, and dies chanting "*La -illaha-illa-Allah*", it is the Hindu, Raj, who completes the sentence "*Muhhamad-rasool-Allah*". In *The Hero* (2003), a Hindu Indian-army major, Batra, comes into a mosque, makes an offering, and talks about Love. Then he suddenly grabs and exposes a man who has a submachine gun, and asks, "So what religion is this man from? Yours? Or mine? No. He is stain on the name of religion. To bring arms to such a holy place is to hurt God."

In *Baby* (2015), Jamal, one of the team, turns traitor, betraying his brother officers to torture and death. He and Ajay were such close friends, it was Ajay who named Jamal's

[494] Used in innumerable films, originally written by Bankim Chatterji in the 1870s during British rule.

son. When a Muslim communal leader, involved with the terrorists, boasts that in the religion column in any document, he writes, in bold capitals, "Muslim", Ajay cites deadpan how he defended a Muslim family in the Gujrat riots against 60 Hindutva rioters, and killed seven rioters in order to do so. He writes, he says, in bold capitals in the religion column, "Indian". Having established his secular credentials, he tortures this leader on screen, and gets the required information. The Muslim leader, having betrayed his comrades, commits suicide. The Gujrat riots reference is bold and the unequivocal scenario makes it bolder. It also establishes that security forces not only risked their own lives to save Muslims, but killed Hindutva rioters to do so.

Dishoom (2016) is a spoof. The "super-hero"-Indian-agent is Kabir Shergill, a secular name, Junaid Ansari (very Muslim) is (anti) Hero number 2. When they hesitate to go through a praying throng to catch their quarry Junaid says to Kabir, "Respect the *Namaz,* and God will look after us." At the final cricket match, amongst the spectators is a hijabi woman wearing an India cricket team shirt, and the opening song has the line, "put Ram against Rahim – bang bang (*dhishoom*)"[495] meaning that he who tries to create communal violence, our heroes will shoot him down.

Very similar to the Loyal Indian Muslim trope, secularism in this context is an inclusion of the religious identity of the Muslim, which is the raison d'etre of Pakistan, and a large part of Pakistani identity, it juxtaposes this against the narrow-mindedness of the Pakistani narrative. Similar to the Loyal Indian Muslim trope, it affirms that India is willing to embrace Muslim-ness, and so there is no real reason for Othering, but simultaneously asserts that Pakistan is not willing to be embraced, and therefore holds Pakistan responsible for it's Othering.

Hindu-Muslim Marriages/Romantic Love (in Pakistan related films)

The ultimate romantic naivety is often the attitude to a Hindu-Muslim marriage in (most) Indian films that have such an situation. In India, there MAY occasionally be a situation where such optimism is justified. In *Mausam* (2011), a self-consciously artistic film, (a

[495] "Ram-Rahim ko larae toh dishoom".

salute to the Indian air force), Machoo (Hindu) and Ghulam Rasool (Muslim) are childhood best-friends, who would give their life for each other. But when Ghulam Rasool's daughter, Aayat, gets engaged to a young Hindu;

> Machoo HOW have you agreed?[496]
>
> (The implication is entirely clear. The question really is "How have you agreed to let your daughter marry a man who is not a Muslim?")
>
> Ghulam Rasool He should be a good human being. That is all. There is one God, after all. He is God of All (of the Universe).[497]

No doubt there exist good people like this, and that there are people who live in multi-religious communities who accept this. But the majority of people, even were they to think like this, would be cast out of their communities for thinking so. The price for such an attitude could as often – or oftener - be an honour killing as such a loving acceptance.

There is one trope that I was just beginning to notice, the different attitudes and responses depending on the religion of the woman. Before I could even voice it, a Pakistani male viewer laughed saying, "Well, you couldn't expect that film to be popular with a Pakistani audience, after all its *our* girl ….!" Kumar too, points this out, with special reference to certain films.[498] Woods too, discusses the "well-rehearsed articulation of …. patriarchal discourse, in portraying a relationship" between the feminine and the masculine, in this case, Pakistan and India. [499]

Below is a table based on this theme, and its corelation to gender, religion and nationality. In an era of Honour Killing and Love-Jihad, [500] a woman from one religion having a

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[496] *Tum maan kaise gaye?*
[497] *Insaan achha hona chahiye. Buss. Khuda to aik hae. Rabul Alimeen*
[498] Kumar, 2008, 131
[499] Woods, 73
[500] Love-Jihad is a marriage between a Muslim man and a Hindu woman, and is used as a political tool by some Hindus to assert traditional gender power relations, and demonize Muslim men. "Love Jihad, a controversial term used to describe an affair or marriage between a Muslim man and a Hindu woman, under the guise of religious conversion, surfaced around 2009 in BJP ruled Karnataka. The term soon entered the political lexicon …. with right-wing organisations … alleging a conspiracy by the Muslim community targeting Hindu women who were honey trapped for conversion to Islam." Desai, Shweta, "Reverse love jihad surfaces in the UP", in DNA (English) Jan 9, 2017
'Love-jihad' also known as 'Romeo-Jihad' is considered as part of an international Islamist conspiracy; it is alleged that young Muslim men receive funds ….. to woo Hindu women and lure them away … from their home and religion." reinforcing the belief that the "body of the Hindu woman has become a site for

romantic relationship with a man from the other, is generally inflammatory for the woman's coreligionists. Interestingly, Hollywood's production code in the early 30's also "forbade the representation of miscegenation except where it was seen to be severely punished at the film's end.", particularly between a "white woman and a non-white man".[501] Without conflating race and religion, this nevertheless highlights the power relations associated with establishing honour and ownership over women's bodies.

Some films go through convulsions to avoid this scenario, militating against the logic of the story. In *Henna*, the Pakistani Muslim girl falls in love with a man she thinks is a Muslim, he turns out to be Hindu. The matter is solved, she dies. The fact that their love is unfulfilled make it somewhat (but not much) more palatable. In *The Hero* (2003) when the hero falls in love with a girl from a Muslim family, it transpires that she is their Hindu foster-daughter. In *Dil Pardesi ho gaya* (2003) a Pakistani Muslim girl falls in love with an Indian from a Hindu family, we find he is fostered, and Muslim by birth. In *Sadiyaan* (2010) when a Hindu boy and a Muslim girl fall in love, we find that he is Muslim by birth, in *Pathaan* (2023) the man is an orphan, religiously ambiguous but adopted by an Afghan community, these last two I have classified as Muslim/ambiguous. In *Fighter* (2024) the matter is not important enough to mention, and in a small minority of people, this may indeed be so, but not in the kind of family the woman in this film comes from.

In *Border Hindustan ka* (2003), a grandmother (*Dadi*) and granddaughter, Nargis, go from Pakistan to India to visit old family friends, Jarnail Singh's family. Jarnail Singh says to *Dadi*, that when he and her husband Ahmad were young, they had decided that if they had a son and a daughter, they would marry the two of them, and become real relatives. Unfortunately, there were only sons in that generation. *Dadi* says, "Well, we have a daughter now." "Nargis?" asks Jarnail Singh. "Would her father agree?" *Dadi* replies, "He will have to listen to me." *Dadi* is deluding herself, her son, Nargis's father, is General Sarfaraz of the Pakistan army, who objects whenever his mother mentions India in her reminiscences, and would not agree to her visiting India. Moreover, Nargis has a fiancée in Pakistan, in itself a big problem, quite apart from any religious or national divide! For a Pakistani general's daughter to marry an Indian army officer would be

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both claims to community homogeneity and honour." Gupta, Charu. "Hindu Women, Muslim Men: Love Jihad and Conversions." In EPW 44:51 (December 2009), as quoted in Khatun, Nadira, 2018

[501] Woods, 75

fraught with complications and a death knell for both careers. This is before one thinks of tackling religious issues!

In *Yahan* (2005) Captain Aman and Ada, a young Kashmiri girl, fall in love, Ada's father comes to see the captain. He says, "We are terrified, we know that. We are bereft, we know that. As much because of you, as because of them (Pakistan? The militants?). But don't think that blood doesn't run in our veins." The captain is silent, he is guilty, he has violated the military code, the hospitality code, the code of honour and tradition. He is a Hindu, the girl is a Muslim. To even offer marriage would simply pour oil on the flames.

The following table shows the pairing pattern visually.

	FILM	WOMAN		MAN	
		Religion	Nationality	Religion	Nationality
1	Boota Singh 1999	Muslim	Pakistan[502]	Sikh	Indian
2	Henna 1999	Muslim	Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
3	Earth 1999	Hindu	pre-partition	Muslim/	pre-partition
4	Train to Pakistan 1999	Muslim	Pakistan	Sikh	Indian
5	Refugee 2000	Muslim	Pakistan	Muslim	Indian
6	Fiza 2000	Muslim	Indian	Hindu	(Indian
7	Mission Kashmir 2000	Hindu	Indian	Muslim	Indian
8	Gadar 2001	Muslim	Pakistan [503]	Sikh	Indian
9	Border Hindustan ka 2003	Muslim	Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
10	Pinjar 2003	Hindu	Indian	Muslim	Pakistani
11	Dil Pardesi ho gaya 2003	Muslim	Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
12	Veer Zara 2004	Muslim	Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
13	Asambhav 2004	Muslim	Indian	Hindu	Indian
14	Yahan 2005	Muslim	Indian	Hindu	Indian
15	Dhandhanadhan goal 2007	Muslim	Pakistan	Sikh?	Indian
16	Awarapan 2007	Muslim	Pakistan	Muslim	Indian
17	Awarapan 2007	Muslim	Indian	Hindu	Indian
18	Jhoom barabar 2007	Muslim	Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
19	Love aaj kal	Muslim	Indian	Sikh	Indian
20	Jhootha hi sahi 2010	Muslim	Pakistan	Japanese	
21	Lahore 2010	Muslim	Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
22	Sadiyaan 2010	Muslim	Indian	Muslim/Hindu	Indian
23	Mausam 2011	Muslim	Indian	Hindu	Indian
24	Ek tha Tiger 2012	Muslim	Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
25	Agent Vinod 2012	Muslim	Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
26	Total Siyappa 2014	Hindu	Indian	Muslim	Pakistani
27	PK 2014	Hindu	Indian	Muslim	Pakistani
28	Tum bin	Hindu	Indian	Hindu	Pakistani
29	Naam Shabana 2017	Muslim	Indian	Hindu	Indian
30	Tiger Zinda hai 2017	Muslim	Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
31	Mission Majnu 2018	Muslim	Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
32	Mulk 2018	Hindu	India	Muslim	Indian
33	Street Dancer 2020	Muslim	Br-Pakistan	Hindu	Indian
34	Indoo ki jawani 2020	Hindu	Indian	Muslim	Pakistani
35	Bhuj 2021	Muslim	Indian	Hindu	Indian
36	Lahore Confidential 2021	Hindu	Indian	Muslim	Pakistani
37	Codename Tiranga 2022	Hindu	Indian	Muslim	Afghan
38	Pathaan 2023	Muslim	Pakistan	Ambiguous	Indian
39	Gadar 2, 2023	Muslim	Indian	Sikh	India
40	Fighter 2024	Hindu	Indian	Muslim	India

[502] This marriage took place during Partition, the woman had never even been to Pakistan, but according to the rules at that time, since her parents became Pakistani, she was legally a Pakistani

[503] Same as the above

The vast majority of women in inter-religious pairings are Muslim women. Of forty women in this sample, twenty-nine are Muslim, eleven are Hindu.

Of the twenty-nine Muslim women, nine are Indian and twenty are Pakistani. For the bulk of the Muslim community, any Muslim woman is "our" woman when it comes to marrying a non-Muslim man, and it is a sin equated with adultery.[504] The matter is not of nationality, but religion. Of the nine Indian Muslim women, eight are paired with Hindu or Sikh men (the same, in this matter), and one man is religiously ambiguous but acceptably Muslim **(***Sadiyaan* 2010). Of the twenty Pakistani Muslim women, three are paired with Indian Muslims, (*Dil Pardesi ho gaya* 2003, *Refugee* 2000**,** *Awarapan* 2007**)**, entirely acceptable. Of the seventeen other Pakistani Muslim women, one is paired with a religiously ambiguous/possibly Muslim man **(***Pathaan* 2023). The other sixteen men are Hindu/Sikh/and one (non-Muslim) Japanese. So of a total of twenty-nine Muslim women, twenty-four are paired with non-Muslim men. Of the smaller number of Hindu women, one out of ten is paired with a Pakistani Hindu, again quite acceptable. Of the other nine, three are paired with Indian Muslims, probably unacceptable to many Hindus in this era of love-jihad, but for many jingoistic Muslim men, this is carrying-off the "enemy's" women, and more acceptable, if not a matter for congratulations. So four Hindu women are paired with Pakistani Muslims, as unacceptable for most Hindus, as the pairing of (twenty-four) Muslim women (eight Indian and sixteen Pakistani) to non-Muslim men is to most Muslims. The diagram demonstrates that the great majority of "mixed"/inter-religious romances show a reverse Love-jihad, where Muslim women are paired with Hindu men, which raises the issue of whether it is more acceptable as it is the Muslim woman's body being used as a site of her community's honour, and being violated or owned by the Hindu male, and to whom this renders it more acceptable or unacceptable. The figures, I would suggest, show the power dynamics of film makers and audiences both with reference to the religious communities within India, as well as between India and Pakistan. Even in a highly sentimental well-loved film like Veer-Zara,

[504] This is generally considered one of the *Hadd* crimes, liable to a *hadd*/maximum limit punishment. The reverse, a Muslim man marrying a non-Muslim woman is more open to interpretation, a Muslim man being allowed to marry a woman from within the "people of the book/s", the "book/s" generally being considered the Abrahamic/Semitic religious texts, the Torah, the Bible, the Koran. A small minority accept Hindus/Sikhs as also people of the book/s, as they too have sacred religious texts.

Kumar clearly discerns "the sexual overtones of a political conquest are unmistakeable." [505]

Woods discusses how an off-screen identity negates an onscreen role, for example "Rani's off-screen (Eurasian) identity negating the vision of inter-caste 'miscegenation' projected in the films" *Achhutt Kanya* (1936) , *Sujata* (1959). [506] This is a fascinating area, and very much in evidence when Shahrukh Khan or Salman Khan or another Muslim star, playing a Hindu role, carries off an (onscreen) Muslim woman, this is somehow palatable.

So while love/marriage is rightly presented as an Embrace, speaking of love, of kinship, of a common and shared future, the reality is that to the woman's community, it is a declaration of war, and may be so for both communities. That is why this is an ambiguous trope.

Exoticisation, Mispronunciation

There is an exoticisation which is not necessarily negative, but definitely Othering, in the wearing of *kajal,*[507] In *Bellbottom* 2021, even the army officer in the President's Office is wearing *kajal.*[508] This is also seen in the speaking of very formal, very chaste "U.P-Urdu" by Pakistanis, wearing of Fez caps (*Hindustan ki kasam* 1999)[509], *namaz*[510] caps, more recently by *keffiyahs* (so far internationally repeatedly used in cinema used to signify terrorism).

The use of "*aadaab*" as a greeting by Pakistanis in Indian Hindi cinema has become a joke in Pakistan (as have the *kajal-wearing* men). "Aadaab" is a secular Urdu greeting and still a traditional form of address amongst the Muslims of Lucknow and Hyderabad Deccan and its environs. The small Urdu-speaking community in Pakistan may have used

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[505] Kumar, 2008, 137
[506] Woods, 105
[507] Kohl eyeliner (kajal) may be worn by religious Muslim men, now (not always) from poorer socio-economic classes. (See Bhattacharya, Chandrima, 2022). Gully Boy is one example of how this wearing of kajal by the main protagonist is seamlessly woven into the film without othering him at all, a master achievement of the director, Zoya Akhtar
[508] Kohl eyeliner
[509] Two male reporters at a press conference in Islamabad in the 90s, are wearing fez caps. I have seen a fez cap in Pakistan perhaps twice, over 50 years ago, and never in the Punjab.
[510] Muslim formal prayer

it in the early years of Pakistan, but outside this community it was almost never used in Pakistan, and is not used at all now. Secular people in India made some effort to adopt this greeting, as it is not religious like *Namaste* [511] or *Salaam*[512], and incorporates minority culture into the mainstream, nevertheless, it is the preserve of a "cultured" elite. This greeting is more foreign in Pakistan than in India. Those who migrated from Lucknow to Pakistan were the least likely to be secular, they were 7% of Pakistan's population and concentrated in Karachi, but possibly they used it. In Pakistan it was considered a "wannabe" greeting by people who aspired to talk "posh", like the "Urdu speakers". In Pakistan, this greeting is archaic and irrelevant. To some extent the Indian imagination became a victim of its own propaganda and its own experience of the Muslim League. *Janaab* and *Huzoor* are likewise overly and incorrectly used. After almost 80 years, Hindi cinema still has Pakistanis saying "*adaab*", the Pakistani reaction is best expressed in the title of an article in the Pakistan daily DAWN review of the Indian film *Mission Majnu* (2023), "How many *adaabs* are too many *adaabs*?" [513]

In *Refugee* **(**2000), the Pakistani villager of Rajasthani origin replies to the salaam of a Bihari, with an "*adaab*". On the next occasion, the Bihari refugee is also doing "*adaab*". *Veer-Zara* **(**2004), too, imagines Pakistan peopled by Urdu-speaking immigrants from India, "*Muhajirs*". The Indian Veer, greets the Pakistani Raza, with *aadaab*. Raza arrives at the railway station in a *shervani*; the equivalent of arriving at a railway station in tails and a top hat. In *Lahore* 2010, the excessive formality of the language and manners are more reminiscent of the culture of Lucknow than of Pakistan, in *Jhootha hi sahi* (2009), Aliya's Urdu is the usual over formal Lucknow-Urdu. The Muslim family in *Gadar* (2001) is from the Punjab; their culture and language that of UP Urdu-speakers, like the Hindu Pakistani family in *Tum bin 2* (2016), and Zain in *Jab tak hai jaan* (2012). In *Ek tha Tiger* (2012), Zoya's stilted Urdu accent is acceptable, as in the film (too) she is a British-Pakistani. The only other Pakistani we hear utter a few words is Captain Ibrar, his language too is the usual overformal-ornate-Bollywood-Pakistan-speak. The Punjabi spoken by agents on both sides is entirely authentic!

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[511] Hindi/Indian greeting, I salute/greet you
[512] Muslim greeting, Peace be with you
[513] "Sidharth Malhotra gets trolled for being the cringiest Pakistani stereotype in 'spy thriller' film Mission Majnu - How many adaabs is too many adaabs?" Images DAWN, January 11, 2023. https://images.dawn.com/news/1191378/sidharth-malhotra-gets-trolled-for-being-the-cringiest-pakistani-stereotype-in-spy-thriller-film-mission-majnu

Raazi **(**2018) in this sense was interesting, it can hardly be called a Hindi movie, the language spoken was entirely – and appropriately – Urdu. Although the acting and the story are near-perfect, the Urdu is far too formal. Almost no one from the Pakistan army would speak such Urdu, except the handful of mother-tongue Urdu-speakers. Some of the conversation is laced with Islamic colour which was not the norm in 1971, that came in after Zia's 1977 takeover. The lady of the house would never be addressed as "*Mohtarma*", *Begum-Sahib/Begum-Sahiba* is used. The Urdu spoken by servants is excessively ornate. Again, *Aadaab* is extremely unlikely to be used in Pakistan army circles, where to use such Urdu, you would be trying to make a point of some kind. The farewell greeting "*Allah Hafiz*"[514] was not used in Pakistan in 1971, it came into use post-Zia-ul-Haq, the greeting of that time was *Khuda Hafiz* [515], considered more secular. Women may address their husbands as "*miyan*", a common word for husband, but never used in the context that it was used in the film.

In *Uri* **(**2019), otherwise a well-made film in a very realistic mode, the language of the government official, the treacherous Pakistani couple and the Pakistani PM (in the film) – is typical of what Indian films consider Pakistanis speak, totally out of synch with reality, in a time and place warp, its over 60 years since Pakistan had an Urdu-speaking PM or any Pakistanis spoke that kind of Urdu, but that is the image that still exists in India. Most people in positions of seniority now, are Punjabis (almost 60 per cent of the population), or other locals, Pushtoons and Sindhis. By now the Urdu of this generation of Urdu-speakers too, is no longer the Urdu that was spoken by their grandparents or even their parents.

Lahore Confidential 2021, centres around Urdu poetry. The film's version of the Pakistani characters is totally caught in a time warp and the usual stereotype of the exoticized cultured aristocratic *Lakhnau-vala*, which the Indians are more familiar with as a symbol of the Muslim League, far removed from any Pakistani you would find today.

While the Urdu is over-ornate, the accents are execrable. When the young Pakistani lawyer in *Veer-Zara* says "*Khuda*" (God), in her pronunciation, the word means "dug" in Urdu. In *Asambhav* (2004) even *Al-Hamas* is not correctly pronounced, in *Lamhaa* 2010,

[514] "May God be your protector".
[515] Khuda Hafiz is Persian-based, considered relatively secular, and Allah Hafiz is Arabic based, considered religious. The meaning is exactly the same.

the accent of the two main characters accent is terrible, and worse for the supporting actors. In *Lahore Confidential* 2021, centred around Urdu poetry, Arunaday Singh plays the Pakistani, with his ornate Urdu, and still dropping his *khs* and *ghs*, this sophisticate is stereotypically a terrorist in a poets clothing. The Pakistani character in *Indoo ki jawani* was a pleasant surprise, despite the occasional slip, but on the whole more convincing than many more established actors in accent and idiom.

As a reverse of this, sometimes the Hindi vocabulary of the "Pakistani" characters is too good. In *Refugee*, the Hindi word "*bhaashan*" is used, in *Border Hindustan ka,* (2003) "*sgai*", never used in Pakistani Urdu, although it may be used in Pakistani Punjabi. Ashutosh Rana is known for his Urdu poetry, but in *Ab Tumhare Hawale Watan Saathiyo*, he uses the Hindi word *bhuchaal* (earthquake) instead of *zalzala*, the common Urdu word used in Pakistan. In *English-Vinglish* 2012, the "Pakistani" Salman, otherwise excellent and authentic, uses the Hindi word *shabd*, which would never be used by a Pakistani, in Urdu the word is "*lafz*". In *War Chhod Na Yaar* **(**2013), a Pakistani soldier uses the word "*nagrik*", a Hindi word not used in Pakistan. Even in *Indoo ki jawani* (2020), Samar uses the Hindi word *itehaasic* (historic) rather than the Urdu word, *taareekhee*. In Raazi, the Bengali/Hindi word "*rajnigandha*" for tuberose is used, in *Sarfarosh,* Maj Baig's Hindi accent is far too good!

In *Kabul Express* (2006), each of the 4 main characters play their own nationality, Indian, Pakistani, Afghan and American. There are no jarring accent and language issues! In *Total Siyapa* 2014, the language is authentic, the actor is a Pakistani. In *Sam Bahadur* (2023), the screenplay shows General Yahya in conversation with the Manekshaws. General Yahya was a Pushtoon, more comfortable in English (and Pushto and Persian) than in Urdu, and the common language between him and the Parsi Manekshaws was English. Historical footage used in the film shows him speaking typically Pushtoon-accented Urdu, yet his character in the film speaks in an Urdu idiom and accent. Giving the toast at the disbandment of their regiment, his speech is in Punjabi, by popular demand, that is more possible! Manekshaw himself was proficient in many Indian languages, and is shown reading from his handwritten speech in Urdu, likely to have been his language of education, with English, in pre-Partition Punjab.

Such exoticization of Pakistani culture, as a consequence of doing the same to Indian Muslim culture, the regular mispronunciation of simple Muslim names, makes Pakistanis

(and also Indian Muslims in this case) into "foreigners", and helps to "Other" them, even while trying to show a sophisticated, elegant, literary and aristocratic culture, that is why this trope has an ambiguity.

Culpability

Many Indian films are critical of the Indian government, of India, always of the Indian politicians, police, the administration, even of the Indian army, about Indian policy in Kashmir. I discuss this only in the India-Pakistan context, as this not only affects the portrayal of Pakistan, but also film-makers have to be more careful of criticising India in the particular context of Pakistan. Before discussing culpability, it is also necessary to at least mention (a) the refusal to do so (b) and the hagiographing of India in the Indo-Pakistan context. There are too many films of this kind to name, which operate on the axiom that "terrorism" is always extra-state, and "terrorism" and "cross-border terrorism" are synonymous.[516] However, it is worth keeping in mind that in the current political climate, a criticism of the Indian government of a particular time is a party political tool, where it serves many vested interests to criticize Congress governments. So it is in this context that I look at films that are critical of the Indian authorities too.

Of films which acknowledge Indian culpability in the context of India-Pakistan, many, but not all, have to do with Kashmir. Such films hold Pakistan responsible for violence in Kashmir but also do not absolve India. There are many self-critical – in varying degrees - films about Kashmir, although not one has a good word to say about Pakistan. In addition to culpability in Kashmir, films on persecution of Muslims, corruption and other areas too, hold India culpable, but like *Harud* (2010), they all agree that "The road to salvation does not go through Pakistan."

Human rights

The boldest films are those which deal with human rights violations and state violence in Kashmir. While violations of human rights in India are by no means confined to Kashmir, in the India-Pakistan context, this is the violation that is most commonly shown, another common discussion in this context is of Indian Muslims. I am only dealing with those

[516] Lal, UCLA Social Sciences, no date

depictions of human rights or their violations insofar as they have bearing on the portrayal of Pakistan.

Roja (1992) implied this but to some extent justified it. *Mission Kashmir* (2000) shows terrible and far reaching mistakes made by the Indian security forces, but asserts that they were results of the madness of the time, or anger or revenge or fear, and most had no evil intentions, or were individual acts, like rape. *Yahaan* (2005) shows a pivotal and shocking scene of less than two minutes, in which a highly admired Indian officer is calmly hitting a screaming young bleeding woman, again and again, and in front of her weeping father. The film does show that this happens after 32 people, including women and children have been killed by terrorists, it also shows the Indian army in a good light through the actions and courage of the young captain who calls out the officer, citing the army act, and stops him by threatening to report him. The violence is mundane, much worse is known to have been done. But it is presented shockingly and significantly. *Lamhaa* (2010) shows the brute power of the Indian authorities in Kashmir and its everyday and whimsical misuse trampling over the basic rights of ordinary citizens. It shows the systematic custodial torture of moderate Kashmiris, interrogation in front of families, the army beating people, then "the defeat of Russia in Afghanistan, gave courage to the Kashmiris. …. The community who didn't even know how to use knives now learnt to fire machine guns (shows women in hijab using the guns). Every young man wanted to become a shaheed (martyr). They believed that the flag of Azad Kashmir would fly over the Srinagar Secretariat." One of the terrorist leaders reminds the press how his six-month old baby son was incarcerated with his wife.

There is a substantial section on the disappeared of Kashmir and their families. Like some of the "progressive" films about Kashmir, it shows the faults of the Indian government and its policy, an understanding of the grievances of the local Kashmiri population, and encourages them to resolve these issues through peaceful means rather than violence. In Aatif's election rallies, he says to the Kashmiri Pandits who have been forced out by the militants, "Come back. We have all suffered equally. The difference is that you have suffered at the hands of the militants and we at the hands of the military…. Our differences were very small." A Kashmiri says, "We are victims of looters. Everyone here is a looter. The army loots at the point of the gun, and the leaders, by raising the call of Freedom." Aziza says publicly that "what the treacherous Haji Sahib has done with us,

the governments of India and Pakistan have been doing for much longer," citing India and Pakistan in the same breath.

But no quarter is given to the Pakistanis, whom it shows supporting children as cannon fodder, helping train child soldiers, 4 lakh soldiers in Pakistani Kashmir, and lakhs of fidayeen. GJ/Vikram has to shoot dead a 8-9 year old child, who was catatonically reciting Quranic verses, because a bomb was sewn inside him. Obviously, this affects him (Vikram), eventually, he turns to drink. As he hears the announcement that Haji , who had been arrested after a wealth of evidence against him, has been released on "health grounds", he voice-overs, "In the name of Kashmir, in the name of the Pandits, in the name of Kashmiriyat, in the name of freedom, everyone is complicit."

The accompanying text says;

> "Over 100,000 people have died in this never ending war for Kashmir.
>
> More than 10,000 parents are trying to find out whether their children are dead or alive.
>
> Salaams to the soldiers and civilians who continue to fight fearlessly for peace and justice in the valley."

Harud (2010) shows how this violence pervades the very air breathed in the valley. *Haider* (2014) shows the shocking systemic violence, director Bhardwaj faced a backlash for his "unfair" portrayal of the armed forces.[517] The Indian censor board passed it after cuts, in Pakistan it was banned. Based in 1995, Haider says, "the whole of Kashmir is a prison, my friend." "Operation Bulbul." is to "Catch and kill." The army/police are shown killing captured and bound militants. Big official-looking notices at an army base say "A dead militant is worth one lakh." "Catch them by the balls. Their hearts and minds will follow." Brutal torture, often of students and young boys at organized interrogation camps like Boboland, Hotel 6, Faraz cinema, is shown. Cinema houses are taken over by the military as headquarters, they merrily watch films at will, while tortured people scream in the next room. Roohdar describes how a rival militant force was set up by the Indian army, and on the pretext of internecine fighting, all violence paled in comparison to what they inflicted.[518] *Haider* shows collective punishment, the divided loyalties and

[517] Pandey, Vikas, 2014
[518] Similar to the Black and Tans

pressures on the Kashmiris, specially young people, and homes being blown up. "Eight thousand people disappeared, according to APDP."[519] The Brigadier retorts, "And 3 lakhs Kashmiri pandits in camps." Dead bodies. Children driven mad. Military power. The beauty. The barbed wire. Catatonic men. "Hell is the other name for Mama 2", a camp run by the army to interrogate militants.

> "India Pakistan together
> Played border-border with us
> Now neither does Hindustan let us go
> Nor does Pakistan."

There are many films uncritical of Indian action and policy in Kashmir, which Other Pakistan. But films critical of both states immediately establish more credibility. They may show Pakistan as a manipulative and exploitative Other, and also show the Indian security forces as an Other for Kashmir. I class such films as ambiguous not because they are ambiguous in their attitudes towards Pakistan, but because by holding both Pakistan and India are culpable even if in different ways, this balance that makes the Othering of Pakistan more ambiguous, if they are Othering India, at the same time. If they are both Others – to Kashmir, to the story – then who is the Self and who is the Other? If the self is critical of itself, is there any basis for Othering anyone else? There is a dialectic here, that cancels out Othering.

Muslim Vulnerability

Similar to both the introspective trope, as well as India's culpability on human rights is the trope on treatment of Muslims in India, From holding the administration, the police and society culpable in *Garam Hawa* (1974), a very understated film, to the action thriller *Khakee* in 2004, in which an innocent Muslim doctor is scapegoated and killed in order to hide the crimes of politicians and policemen fomenting communalism, to the searing *Mulk* in 2018, these films all showcase the persecution, discrimination, victimization, and worse, of Muslims in India. *The Hero* **(**2003), part of a generally anti-Pakistan-hagiographing-India genre, a sub-set of Sunny Deol films, shows the harsh and humiliating way in which the Indian army deals with the Kashmiris and how the army is

[519] Association of Parents of Disappeared People

disliked and distrusted. When a film of this provenance notes culpability, no matter how minimal, it cannot be dismissed. In *Yahan* (2003). Shakeel was a hardworking and cheerful fellow, supporting the Kashmiri cause through articles and publishing, not violence. As life is in Kashmir, some of his friends joined the armed struggle. Tainted by association, he too is forced to flee, to escape being tortured for information, which he did not have. That ultimately, he has little choice but to join the militants, is a criticism of the Indian state. Even in *Baby* (2015), a violent anti-terrorist film, there are a few thoughtful lines. They are as gratuitous as the violence on which the film is based. At a meeting with the Interior Minister, the head of "Baby" (a covert autonomous unit), Firoz Ali Khan, says, "[The enemy] are not failing. . …. It is OUR failure that [Jamal] left us and went over to the enemy camp." A senior bureaucrat replies, "Jamal was a traitor", Firoz responds "It's not that simple. Jamal was an Indian. The man who controlled the Mumbai attack sitting in Karachi was not a Pakistani. He is an Indian. These people have been convinced that India is not their country, and convinced to act against it, by using their religion as a tool. OUR children are being enrolled (for terrorism). … If the members of the community feel that they do not belong here and they are losing faith in us, then that is the terrorist organizations biggest success and our biggest failure." These thought-provoking lines promise something better from the film than is delivered, which ventures no further into these waters.

Exactly as the trope on India's culpability regarding human rights, such tropes speak to a more discerning audience also, diluting any Othering of Pakistan by balancing it out by holding India responsible for its actions, even if in a somewhat differing sphere.

At the same time both the above tropes actually make their Othering of Pakistan more credible by questioning Indian culpability too. Thus these are double-edged tropes.

Conclusion

So far we had examined the tropes from the introspective point of view of the Self, and when the Self defines and hostilely identifies the Other. But before the Self and this Other can move on to a more positive interaction, we were confronted by another body of tropes that do not fit comfortably into the three common-sense themes of Introspection, Hostility or even Reconciliation.

Even in context, most of these are tropes which could be considered in a positive or negative light, depending on the pre-existing sympathies of the viewer. They contain within them a dialectic that cancels out Othering of Pakistan on one hand, while at the same time, making any criticism of the Other more credible by juxtaposing it with a criticism of the Self.

The very intention of the film maker is dependent on the opinions the audience already hold. Showcasing the loyalty of Indian Muslims both Others them and seeks to include them, Secularism is a word that is sacred to many and used as an abuse by others, Hindu-Muslim love is anathema to many, and acceptable to others, even if only in an on-screen version. To foreground culpability of the Indian state vis a vis Pakistan totally changes the whole perspective of a film, but not necessarily making it more hostile or more reconciliatory. Exoticization and mispronunciation is a space to watch, and speaks of the distance between Indians and Pakistanis, and even Indian Muslims. And I will discuss the separation of the Pakistani people from the Pakistan state again, in the thesis Conclusion.

There is already a certain progressive Indian viewpoint built into these narratives. I particularize this as a very Indian kind of progressiveness. In India, according to the still current constitution, such beliefs are without caveat. This viewpoint may be getting outdated in India, but for the moment it still prevails or at least it has not officially been refuted, it holds that democracy, secularism, human rights, are good and enlightened philosophies

These are tropes that substantiate that the primary audience for Indian film is the Indian audience, the films are based on these much vaunted values that are enshrined in the Indian constitution, they are part of this still ongoing nation-building spirit. They speak very much to the acknowledgment of a common subcontinental culture and identity and ethics, and to Inclusion. Even when an exoticised Muslim culture is presented, this tends to concentrate more on the superior and positive aspects of the culture, not the degenerate or atavistic or negative aspects, which is the preserve of other films. The ambiguity lies in the possibility that such an embrace threatens the Otherness that Pakistan maintains a priori and continues to seek to create, secularism is not a good word in Pakistan, democracy, human rights, the position of minorities are constitutionally subservient to

Islam. So how far such tropes encourage peace in the region, how far they reach towards an Embrace, is ambiguous.

So after discussing Othering, in its generally presumed default option of hostility, and before we moved on to less considered aspects of Othering where acceptance of Othering may allow the possibility of overcoming it, the evidence of the films so far gave us this intervening chapter of ambiguous tropes, paving the way to the final empirical chapters of the thesis, where we emerge into more clearly positive tropes.

Chapter 6 – Reconciliatory Tropes: Sameness, Pakistani women, and Another Other

This chapter and the next explore tropes which portray a positive ethos of Sameness and conciliation. Essentially, both these chapters discuss positive portrayals, but marking a distinction between a portrayal that foregrounds Sameness, implying acceptance of a peaceful coexistence, but which falls short of actual reconciliation, which I have termed as the Embrace, and discussed in the following chapter. Such portrayals are even more difficult to parse and this distinction may be considered academic, nevertheless it implies a difference in the degree of positivity. It completes the spectrum of the tropes portrayed in the thesis which cover introspective, ambiguous, hostile and reconciliatory tropes.

This chapter begins with 'Sameness' and discusses two other tropes; the positive representation of Pakistan women, and identifying Another Other, so as to avoid vilifying Pakistan or to show collaboration with Pakistan.

Sameness

Sameness, in this context is posited as the opposite of Othering, a trope that draws on commonalities with Pakistan, with or without kinship. It is seen in six sub-tropes through which sameness is articulated and affirmed.

1. Interchangeability
2. Sameness in another geography
3. Joint Front/Common enemy
4. Sameness of the Common Man
5. Positive Sameness in Hostile films
6. We are the same people – Love, Friendship and common culture

Interchangeability

This is a common trope used in both positive and negative stories, used to show that there is no intrinsic difference between Indians and Pakistanis. It starts with *Dharmputra* (1961) or perhaps even *Dhool Ka Phool* (1959), where it applies only to religion, but in the context of the creation of Pakistan. In *Sadiyaan* (2010), the Pakistan-India interchangeability is interwoven with religion, where a child from one faith is brought up in the other. In *Henna* (1991) a Hindu Indian, Chander, loses his memory, and is accepted as a Pakistani. The truth is discovered, suddenly everything changes, even though he does not. In *Jhoom Barabar Jhoom* (2007), *Ek tha Tiger* (2012), *PK* (2014), Indians and Pakistanis meet abroad, and initially don't realize they are "Others", and then realize through this initial misapprehension that they really are not. Films like *Mission Majnu* (2023) *D-Day* (2013), *Welcome 2 Karachi* (2015), *DPHG* (2003), *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973), *Hindustan ki kasam* (1999), *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015), all use sameness as a tool, whether in an impersonation or a lack of identification story, *Raazi* (2018) is able to visibly move from being Indian to being Pakistani through marriage and perfectly conceal her Indian loyalties.

In *Mission Majnu* **(**2023), Indian spy Amandeep, posing as Tariq, passes as a local, he and his Pakistani wife quote Hindi film dialogues to each other. The role has to base itself in this Sameness, his Tariq-self typically Othered with *kajal* and *ittar*, and the stereotype of the Muslim tailor, although his excessive *adaabs* and *janaabs* would have had him exposed in a day. In *DPHG* (2003) Sunny has to be examined for circumcision to establish his identity. Names usually show religion, but not nationality. If (at least) Indian Muslims and Pakistanis are 'interchangeable', does this sameness imply a potential for embracing, or more negatively a possible denial of Pakistani agency, or desire for statehood?

Sameness in another geography

Many films show Indians and Pakistanis meeting outside the subcontinent, and even with full knowledge of each other's Otherness, discovering a sameness and a common culture. *Dhan Dhana Dhan Goal* (2007), *Jhoom Barabar Jhoom* (2007), *Jhootha hi sahi* (2010), *Ek tha Tiger* (2012), *PK* (2014) *Total Siyyapa* (2014), *Street-Dancer* (2023) and *JTHJ* (2012) all express sameness through this trope.

Unspoken politics, in the style of *Jhootha hi sahi* (2010) and *Dhan Dhana Dhan Goal* (2007), (both based in London), convey the seamless relationships of the subcontinent, sometimes under the seeming acrimony of the words. A chance meeting in London, between Alvira, an upper-class Pakistani girl, and Ricki, a brash Indian man, is the romance. Their prickly repartee is typical of Indians and Pakistanis meeting abroad. Indian Ricki's best friends are Pakistani, Alvira's are Indian. The film illustrates Pakistani resentment at the constant assumption that they are Indian, the Pakistani does not wish to be "owned", but also immediately discovers commonalities, the first being Hindi film, the second common sub-continental friends. As a mirror, the Indian constantly assumes that Indians and Pakistanis are "same to same", and rolls his eyes at the Pakistani carrying the burden of "sixty years of enmity".

Dhan Dhana Dhan Goal 2007 begins with a group of Indians, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, who according to their captain, Shaan, a British-Pakistani in Southhall, have only one religion, football. The film is not about the usual separations, but about South-Asian solidarity (and the lack of it) in the face of British racism, forced to confront their joint Otherness, they find solidarity in a common South-Asianness. The footballers argue about religion, money, wives, sisters, body odour; their conflicts have nothing to do with nationality or religion.

Jhootha hi sahi (2010) too, opposes the larger narrative of Otherness with which Pakistan is visualised. In a totally nonpolitical way, *Jhootha hi sahi* (2010) is a strong political statement. The main story is irrelevant; this film is missing from any discussion of Indo-Pak films, it centres around a group of friends in London. Sidharth, from India, and Omar and Aliya, a brother and sister from Pakistan, live in and out of each other's adjacent flats, from breakfast till bedtime. They are family to each other. These relationships are common and familiar amongst sub continentals abroad, and the fact that they are never addressed is part of their authenticity. The Pakistanis are entirely non-stereotypical; stereotypically, their Urdu is the excessively formal Urdu of Hindi cinema.

In *English-Vinglish* (2012), Salman, a Pakistani, is learning English in a small class in New York. When the students are required to speak for a minute in English, Salman says. "English class become one big family. No border problem. Salman *bhai*, Rama *bhai*, *bhai-bhai*, brothers (Rama also nodding his head happily), Shashi *behan*, my Indian sister

(Shashi says, "sweet") ….", in a later incident both the Indian and the Pakistani assume a protective brotherly role towards Shashi.

Total Siyyapa **(**2014) [520] weaves in and out of sameness and differences. A London romance between a Pakistan boy and an Indian girl, it shows that while even a Muslim is foreign to the Indian family, a Pakistani is beyond the pale, despite a common Punjabiness. The Pakistani Urdu is authentic, (the actor is a Pakistani). A good subcontinental boy, he doesn't drink or swear, (at least he resists), he is law-abiding and civic minded, similar to the Pakistani in *Indoo ki jawani* (2020). When Asha announces that Aman is a Pakistani, her horrified Mother starts praying loudly at the household shrine, telling them, "After 1947, there can be no love-shove between India and Pakistan!" Aman and Asha have a typical India-Pakistan sameness mirror fight, sublimating ISI and RAW and Balochistan for their personal tensions. When Aman walks out, Asha runs after him, they finally come into an Indian-Pakistani embrace on London Bridge ….a storybook Love-Jihad in 2014.

Street Dancer **(**2020) is about Sameness, reconciliation and embrace, but a lost opportunity because of poor execution. Its subversive elements could have elevated the film, says Saibal Chatterji, but interesting angles seemed "tacked on", rather than being a "subversive core",[521] the India-Pakistan element, the issue of illegal immigrants, the good work of NishkamSWAT,[522] identity issues. Based amongst two rival dance groups of second generation Indians and Pakistanis in the UK, the third are the British, playing their stereotypical role, dividing-and-ruling and being arrogant. Annah suggests that if they dance as one team, they would have a better chance. A Pakistani rejects this, the Indians react, saying "We can never be one," the subtext here drawing on the constant reciprocal tit-for-tat between the two countries. Inayat suggests competing for a dance competition, and donating the prize money to Annah's work with illegal subcontinental immigrants. Her team agrees, Annah starts to coach them, the Pakistani team with an Indian coach is becoming the unbeatable combination. Indians who had joined the British team, leave one by one and join the Pakistanis. After the initial awkwardness, an Indian

[520] Adaptation of Spanish-Argentinian film "Only Human", about Palestinian-Israel
[521] Chatterjee, Saibal, 2020
[522] Nishkam Sikh Welfare and Awareness Team, UK

puts out his hand; after a moment's hesitation, the team embraces him, again a political lesson; if you initiate an effort, the other side will respond with an embrace. A song for Ganpati is fused with the poetry of Khwaja Ghulam Fareed, another song is about the "girl from Lahore." The final song says, "Embrace me, when you and I sing together, the notes become our song."

These films express a real life trope that South-Asians find a common culture when they meet – which normally happens only outside the region. The possibility of reconciliation and embrace is based on sharing this common culture rather than recognising political differences or national identity.

Joint Front/Common Enemy

Many films present a united front/collaboration, often against another Other. *Agent Vinod* and *Pathaan* are both stories of Indians and Pakistanis collaborating against nuclear or biological weapons. *Fanaa* even has the Indian and Pakistani government trying to collaborate against terrorism, as do *Hindustan ki kasam 99* and *Ulajh* in favour of peace, Tiger-3 to save democracy in Pakistan .

In *Hindustan ki kasam* 99, the Pakistani PM flies to Delhi on a peace mission, but rogue Pakistani agents sabotage his plane. Heroic action by the Pakistani and Indian twins, succeeds in landing the plane safely. Realizing treachery, the Pakistani terrorist-general is arrested. The two PMs shake hands, and Kabira, the sufi-mystic-poet-Indian-army-senior-officer says "The people of these two countries just want this, sir. …. For centuries, saints and dervishes kept Hindus and Muslims bonded together. A few politicians made a partition of our brotherhood. In one house they hung two nameplates, India and Pakistan. …. but one brother can never become the enemy of the other. We may have separated, but the roots of our relationship [remain] – even …. hatred cannot break the bonds of our relationship….." Here too, is kinship as well as sameness.

Ek tha Tiger and *Tiger Zinda hai* fit into this trope in an interesting way. In the first, Indian Tiger and Pakistani Zoya fall in love and deceive their employers, RAW and ISI, who find themselves unwillingly collaborating against their former colleagues. In the second, Tiger and Zoya and RAW and ISI collaborate in a rescue mission to rescue Indians and Pakistanis caught in someone else's war. In *Agent Vinod* (2012), *Tiger-3*

(2023), *Pathaan* (2023), while Indians and select Pakistanis collaborate, the Enemy are rogue Pakistanis, in *Main hoon na* (2004) it is rogue Indians. *Dhan Dhana Dhan Goal* (2007) and *Gold* (2018) show Indians and Pakistanis collaborating in sports and more. In *D-Day*, they do not collaborate, but have a common enemy in Dawood Ibrahim, once protected by Pakistan, now "he is a termite," says the Pakistani general, Ibrahim accuses both ISI and RAW of planning to kill him.

In *Total Siyyappa* (2014), there is an comedic *lief motif* of a racist British policeman symbolising the British raj. When Asha fights the police at Aman's dramatic arrest, the policeman dubs this an "Indo-Pakistani conspiracy". Asha's brother, always at war with their Pakistani neighbours, enlists three Indian friends to confront them. The policeman, trying to separate these bat-and-hockey-stick wielding "terrorists" into Indians and Pakistanis, reminds them of how they were "divided and ruled," and unites them. The Pakistanis insist that they must strike first, they are the elder, by a day. This is a cheery twist on the usual trope of Pakistan as the younger brother. Hockeys and bats flail, a beaten-up policeman lies in a garbage heap, the sub-continentals go home together in great good humour.

These films make Pakistan and India into brothers (allies) by inventing another Other.

Sameness of the Common Man

This trope expresses not collaboration, but solidarity. There is always a poignancy in this trope, as in *Main hoon na* (2004), *Tahan* (2008), *Filmistan* (2012), *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* (2014), and *Kabul Express* (2006). This tends to be solidarity in the joint face of the state(s).

In *Main hoon na* (Don't worry- I am here) (2004) Sameness is portrayed through the two ragged rows of fishermen from India and Pakistan, who cannot be told apart, going home in opposite directions. Even the Pakistani army, in its brief appearance, mirrors and reflects the Indian goodwill gesture, both sides in full regalia. Maj. Ram says to an Indian renegade, who is against the release of innocent Pakistani prisoners, "… your question was whether Pakistan would also release our prisoners. You people said that Pakistan would laugh at our stupidity. …. Pakistan has turned out to be as stupid as us. Pakistan too wants peace!"

In *Kabul Express* (2006), two Indian journalists travel with a man they are horrified to discover is a Pakistan-Talib soldier. Forced to share adventures and help each other, willingly or unwillingly, in the epilogue, Jai and Suhel muse silently;

> Jai So this was our story of our journey with The Enemy. But, why was he The Enemy? …. we were just five guys travelling together. We all felt fear. We all felt anger. All of us enjoyed singing, and cricket – ….
>
> Suhel …. in our report …. we had to cut out most of what we had seen and experienced with Imran. Taliban are still the enemy, how could we tell the audience that we almost made friends with one. ….

These sentiments are similar to some expressed in *Ek Tha Tiger* (2012) by the same director. *Filmistan* **(**2012), a very black comedy, takes place in Pakistan, and shows Hindi cinema as the common language between an Indian kidnappee and his Pakistani "captors". Kidnapped by some "Islamic-terrorists", Sunny is shocked to discover that he is in Pakistan, "the houses, the faces, the food, everything is the same!" A village is forced into hosting the kidnappee. Through the commonality of cinema references, the villagers warm to Sunny. Sunny and Aftab become friends. The menace of mundane violence is ever present. "– no matter what our relations with our neighbouring country, we watch the other side's films, after all politics isn't something that the common man can make sense of….." Aftab warns Sunny that if he escaped to the border, he would be shot by the border guards on one side or the other. "They don't care whether you're Indian or Pakistani, they shoot first" (There is a similar line in *Bajrangi Bhaijan* - 2015). You're a common man, and a common man counts for nothing." Finally, Sunny and Aftab run away together, they are chased and shot at; we do not know if they cross the border, but they do not abandon each other. In the end, Jinnah and Nehru's fiery Independence days speeches are interspersed with each other, and the lament;

> My homeland
> What is this mine and thine
> That divides our hearts
> A curse be upon
> These lines…….

Where *Filmistan* ends, *Kya Dilli kya Lahore* **(**2014) begins, the same fiery speeches, background to pictures of Partition migrations. This film questions the concept of the nation-state. It is critical of Partition, but also of the idea of the-nation-as-family, and of

the army being honourable. The film begins with an Indian soldier running away in almost-comic terror, and for this alone, the film could have been dubbed anti-national. He is alone, and speaks respectfully to the Pakistani soldier. They argue and fight over Pakistan's share at partition, there is banter, then taunts. When they ask after each other's family, one says to the other,

> "And your mother?"
> "You cut her into bits."
> "There was killing and butchering on both sides."
> "A bit more on us."
> "Everyone thinks that."
> "Kiss your father and your child. They need you more than this border does."
> "If it wasn't for this mother-fucking border, we wouldn't be in this mess!"

Here again the focus is on "enemy" individuals who make a relationship in the most difficult circumstances. The film ends with the Pakistani soldier's killing, metaphorically showing that there is no route to progress beyond their personal encounter, it speaks of the betrayal of possibility.

A positive sameness in Hostile films

In *Border* (1997) what little is shown of Pakistan is negative. Only in one joyous scene, the soldiers receive letters from home; one soldier proudly reads his son's letter – without comment; "Our teacher says the people across the border are the same as us, look like us, have the same language and the same clothes. Why then are we fighting them?"

In 1999, at least seven films mentioning Pakistan were released. One was *Sarfarosh*. Pakistani poet-musician Gulfam is introduced to a gathering as " …. this great artist is …. both our guest and our host. He belongs as much to India as to Pakistan. His childhood belongs to India, his youth to Pakistan. His poetry belongs there, his singing and music here." Gulfam is registered as the Other, but immediately embraced and owned. He responds in kind, "….I belong to India as much as I belong to Pakistan. To both I have …. the most important kind of relationship ….that …. is called Love….. This politics is a joke on us. When we were born, this universe was ours, [when] we grew up, there was India and Pakistan." Ajay is honoured when Gulfam seals their friendship with an

embrace, and says "the ghazals between your country and mine are so similar", Gulfam replies, "Not similar, but the same – my music is the property of this land, Urdu after all was born in India, and classical music too, is the wealth of this land." Making the point that Pakistan's language and language were born in India! But Gulfam is actually an ISI agent, involved in terrorism, so the words speak Sameness, but the message shatters it.

Gadar (2001), presents a Machiavellian portrayal of Pakistan. But when the mob chasing a screaming Sakina are determined to rape and lynch this "*Musalmani*", Tara uses the blood on his injured hand to put a *sindhoor* on her forehead; one of the iconic moments of the film. And declares, "So now she is a Sikhnee! So if anyone so much as looks in her direction, I swear by the Guru, I'll cut off his head!" Sameness shouts out loud, a small sindhoor mark changes death into life.

In *Border Hindustan ka* (2003) when two old pre-partition friends meet, each asks after the other's son, one replies simply, " He died defending his country." Of course, he died in the war between their two countries. Later the old grandmother says, "Every soldier dies for his country. Whether it is *there*, or *here*." On another occasion, Nargis asked Raj, "So who are the people who have killed my uncle?", and Raj replies, "Some of yours and some of ours."

In *Ab Tumhare Hawale Watan Saathiyo* (2004) too, when the Pakistani officer, Ashfaque, challenges the Indian Rajeev to a fight, "We will see how much strength there is in the milk of an Indian mother!" Rajeev replies, "A mother's milk always has strength. Whether she is Indian or Pakistani." Here citing the sameness of mothers, as in *Veer-Zara*, the same year.

Kabul Express 2006 expresses the innate commonalities between Pakistanis and Indians even as they overtly try to express Othering, in much the same way that Athique and Chaturvedi discuss[523] the Wagah border war dance. Two Indian journalists in Afghanistan, find a stowaway in their van, a Pakistani Talib, trying to get back to Pakistan. Forced to obey him at gunpoint, they decide to be civil. The stowaway's name is Imran Khan, which prompts a passionate discussion on cricket, leading to an armed confrontation! Not simply cricket but the passionate opinionated-ness on this subject is also shared. A happier sameness is everyone singing Hindi songs. A number of films,

[523] Chapter 2

even war films, refer to the common film culture, in *Shershaah* (2021), the Pakistani soldier is talking about Madhuri Dixit when the Indian kills him before his sentence is completed.

The expressions of these tropes cite a sympathetic loving commonality, occasionally an acrimonious commonality, but an essential comradeship, without threat of a suffocating ownership, the context is generally that of harmony and embrace.

We are the same people – Love, Friendship and common culture

The official Indian line is that we **were** the same people, till we officially became two separate countries. *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973) follows this exactly; a line drawn on a map, made two peoples of us, it accepts unquestioningly, the notion of nation. Perhaps this line divided two peoples, those who believed in the two nation theory and those who did not. Here I look at those films which do not accept this, which believe that border or not, we are the same people, they cite the commonality of not simply South-Asian culture, but an Indo-Pakistani culture. Given that this thesis is looking at Hindi film, language, despite anomalies, is still one of the affirming factors. This sameness doesn't simply enable romance and marriage but allows seamless integration into family and society.

In *Henna* (1999) Khan Baba, the village head, reflects on a time when neighbours shared joys, sorrows, each other's festivals, sent meals to each other's homes, "now they send spies….. Isn't it amazing that a line drawn a piece of paper can erase God-created age-old bonds of love with hate, and suspicion?" In *Refugee* 2000, the village headman says; "The Pakistanis eat what we do. They wear what we wear. They think what we think. *Arre bhai*, our brothers and friends are *that side* as well as *this side*. We want our daughters to get married that side, and their daughters to get married our side." At the end of this film, in a beautiful sequence, the Muslim Pakistani and the Indian Hindu are shown praying at a shrine, mirroring each other and their different faiths in similar movements, seemingly unconscious of each other.

Hindustan ki kasam (1999) establishes Sameness with a sledgehammer. Foregrounding both Sameness and Othering, the story is about twins, one Indian, one Pakistani. A "twins" concept militates against any intrinsic Othering. The twins eventually meet as adults; one, a mild Indian writer, the other, a Pakistani terrorist. The writer says, "….we stand with a line dividing us. But our country is the same, our blood is the same. and we

are born of one woman's womb." At the end, we cut to Wagah; after the war dance, the gates open, people stream across the border and embrace.

> Whenever good neighbours meet, they say
> You are my life, I am your life
> You are my honour, I am your respect
> You are Pakistan, I am India.

The film accepts Pakistan - with an imaginary (sycophantic!) civilian government - and villainizes the Pakistan army. The film was almost prophetic in its description of the rift between Nawaz Sharif's government and the Pakistan army.

Veer-Zaara **(**2004) was the highest grossing film of 2004. What lifts it out of being the typical romance is simply that it involves India and Pakistan, and stars Shahrukh Khan. The film has "deep emotional investment in reconciliation in bringing two conflicting nations together." [524] This is done through a portrayal of essential Sameness, though the visible structure displays the differences, as do *Bajrangi*, and *Dharmputra*, and differently to *Henna* and *Refugee.* The story takes place both in India and Pakistan. Although Pakistan is Zara's home, Veer is an outsider when in Pakistan, although **he** does not **feel** so. But Zara in India is totally at home. Perhaps due to stereotypical gender roles, although Zara is a rebel, "brought up like a son", she ends up happily adjusted in the husband's home, because this is how gender roles are, but also because Hindu-Muslim marriages are legal in India; and not in Pakistan. The film attempts to break stereotypes, showing Saamiya, a Pakistani woman lawyer, based on many Pakistani courageous women lawyers. Girls are shown cycling in Pakistan, another effort at shaking misconceptions. Visiting India, Zara's bus meets with an accident, she is rescued by Veer, an Indian Airforce pilot, who falls in love with her. She thanks him with a promise "made by a Pakistani to an Indian, so …. a matter of honour!" to visit his village, showing her his homeland on the way. She sings;

> " …. I've come to know your homeland,
> Somehow it seems so familiar to me
> …..
> I too have just such a homeland as is yours
> As your homeland is, so too is mine."

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[524] Viswanath, 2009

She meets Veer's father, who raises "A toast to our neighbouring country!" When she finds that Veer's family funds the local boys school, she gives them a lecture on women's education. It's a turnup for a Pakistani to be doing that, AND she is so convincing, the very next day they set up a girl's school, inviting her to lay the first brick! Veer's father asks her to tell her parents that as an Indian, he salutes their daughter's traditional values, the implication being that these values are the same. Veer pursues Zara to Lahore, but then promises Zara's mother that they will separate in order to preserve her family's honour. Overcome, Zara's mother asks if all the people from his country are like him. He replies, "…. certainly every mother is just like you." Zara too accepts the marriage her family has arranged, showing the common culture of both countries is that good young people put the wishes of their elders before their own. When Veer is wrongly charged by the police, the wicked fiancé says to him, "One of the defining characteristics of both your country and mine is that money and power can get anything done". This sentence robs the possibility of offence by showing sameness.

In court Veer only speaks to recite this poem;

> "From this soil I sense the fragrance of my father's fields
> This sunshine reminds me of the cool lassi my mother churned,
> These rains bring me monsoon memories I swung through in my childhood.
> This winter warms me like the bonfires of Lori festivals.
> They tell me this is not my land
> Why then, does it feel like mine?
> They tell me that I am not like him
> Why then does he look like me?"

This is a poster film for Shahrukh Khan's signature themes, a positive secular nationalism, friendship with neighbouring Pakistan, and peace in the region. *Veer-Zara* continues to be a major film in Indian film history, still on Netflix, twenty years later. Nevertheless, one of Banaji's interviewees, a Muslim British Asian says, " …. the Indian family in Veer-Zaara [is] so much fun and so loving and the Pakistani one so strict and unhappy? Who causes all the problems in the film? (The Pakistanis)." [525]

[525] Banaji, 2008, 173

Awarapan **(**2007) is a nonpolitical film, girls of different nationalities are trafficked; it too shows the common mileu. *Sadiyaan* 2010 cites the common culture of the Punjab, the rivers, the Sufis, the warriors; then we see Partition, and a Hindu-Sikh family, terrified and exhausted, arrive in "Indian" Punjab on a train from Lahore, in which there was carnage. They are taken to the now-empty haveli of Shahabudin, a good man, driven out by Indian rioters, now fled to Pakistan. From the beginning, violence is shown on both sides. They find in the house a Quran, which they treat respectfully, the next thing they find is a child. The family tries to find a Muslim family for this child, but after taking him to the refugee camp, where "There is no one left with any tears in their eyes, nor any breast with milk left in it", Rajveer's wife, Amrit Kaur, desperate to adopt the child, gets her wish by default. Now a young man, Ishaan falls in love with a Muslim girl, whose parents object to her marrying a non-Muslim. In the modern day, Rajveer makes inquiries and writes a letter in beautiful Urdu script to Ishaan's biological parents. The Pakistani parents arrive, overwhelmed and grateful, we see their pain at coming back to their ancestral home, no longer theirs. The Muslim mother pays her respects at the Golden Temple, harking back to a pre-partition culture of harmony. The modern story is inconsistent, what is real is the chaos of partition, the pain of loss, and the relationships across this border. The Pakistani mother finally voices that Ishaan belongs with the people where he has grown up, in his ancestral home.

In *PK* (2014), the main story is distinct from the Indo-Pakistani sub-story romance, which is introduced in the sixth minute and occupies the next 14 minutes of the 2 hour 33 minute film, after which it is almost over. The romance is a device to express commonalities as well as expose the god-man of the film. Other devices could have been used, but the Pakistani Indian story has a context, and a charm, and brings in inclusivity and a poignancy of its own. It is shorthand to automatically but actively bring in the dimension of Indo-Pak peace.

Even *Welcome 2 Karachi* (2015) showcases sameness. Two idiot Indians, Shammi and Kedar, get lost in Pakistan, with no idea where they are. Replete with stereotypes and sameness, the Pakistanis are good-looking drug-smugglers, terrorists, villains; the only positive Pakistani, is a caricature of the "hot" Pakistani woman agent. The buffoonish Indians still they emerge as the heroes, as the film weaves in and out of sameness and the

ludicrousness of Othering, showcasing the absurdity of the politics of Pakistan, America and Afghanistan, (but not of India) and the absurdity of these two Indians. All the action takes place in Pakistan. To escape, they steal and wear Pakistani clothes, but, Kedar says, what will we do about our faces? "Idiot, we're not in Africa or China, we're in Pakistan, our faces are the same!" says Shammi.

The main motivation of *Happy Bhag Jayegi* **(**2016**)**, is to show Sameness and friendship. The main protagonist, Bilal, is a positively portrayed Pakistani, similar to *Total Siyyapa* (2014) and *Indoo ki jawani* (2020). Indians and Pakistanis are constantly mistaking each for the other and Pakistan for India. The Indians may be crazy, but are inspirational, specially the eponymous Happy. The language and accent of the Pakistani character, Afridi, are stereotypically ornate, suitable as comedy, but the others are authentic; two are Pakistani actors. Among all the commonalities are language, cinema, fashion, cricket, and love.

Raazi **(**2018) is an important film, sometimes classed an extremely nationalistic film, sometimes as an anti-"nation" film (as opposed to anti-national). Based on "real incidents", made with the cooperation of the Indian navy, it is about betrayal and loyalty. Both Indians and Pakistanis are shown as good people, upright, dutiful, patriotic, family-minded, affectionate. The Indian spy, Sehmat and the Pakistani children, sing "Ae Watan" (My homeland) together, united in their love for their warring motherlands, showing the insanity of war between these two countries so closely united by kinship.

Gold (2018), part-fact and part-fiction, foregrounds the narrative of "we are the same people." Beginning in 1930s, the story is about India's hockey team. Details are fictionalized, characters amalgamated, but history is interwoven into the story. The point is clearly made in the film that Britain as a team never competed with a team from their colonies, part of the apartheid of sports.

The Indian team was religiously mixed.[526] In 1936, in Munich, some Indian players, surreptitiously salute the Indian flag. Tapan-Das, our anti-hero team-manager, a compound-fictionalized character, exhorts them to remember that they are not playing a game, they are there to strike a blow against 200 years of empire. Imtiaz Shah, Captain for the post-independence team, a Muslim, later Captain of the Pakistan team, is the backbone of the historical narrative. His character is based on Ali Iqtidar Shah Dara, one of the 1936 gold-medal-winning Olympics team, he later joined the INA. After Partition, Dara migrated to Pakistan, captained the 1948 Pakistan team, and had a legendry friendship with erstwhile team-mate Dhyan Chand, India's hockey captain; in the 1968 Olympics, giving game-changing advise to the Indian team.[527] Dara and Dhyan Chand remained involved with India-Pakistan peace efforts through hockey,[528] and maintained their friendship till Dara's death in 1981.[529]

That Imtiaz joined Bose's INA, is mentioned twice in the film, underlined to show that there was not only one kind of political opinion amongst the Muslims, or even amongst Pakistanis, as Imtiaz Shah became later. [530] Imtiaz and Tapan's friendship is essential to the film. Muslim integration in society is visible; at boisterous parties, some Muslims drink, some don't. When alcohol is surreptitiously served in teacups, Raghuvir Singh warns a Muslim player, "Hey, Shakoor *bhai*, this is not for you - !"

When Imtiaz Shah, then Captain of the Indian team, arrives in Amritsar, his Sikh team-mate, Himmat Singh, arrives at the station to receive him, touches his feet, warning them

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[526] **1936 Hockey squad**

Christians	**Hindus /Sikhs**	**Muslims**
Richard Allen	Dhyan Chand	Ali Dara
Earnest Cullen	Baboo Nimal	Mohomed Hussain
Lionel Emmett	Gurcharan Singh Garewal	Mohammed Jaffar
Peter Fernandes	Daya Shankar Mishra	Ahmed Khan
Joseph Galibardy	Roop Singh	Ahsan Mohomed Khan
Cyril Michie		Mirza Masood
Joseph Phillip		Shabban ShahabudDin
Carlyle Tapsell		

NOTE: It is not always possible to differentiate between Hindus and Sikhs simply from their names. My categorization above is an informed guess.

[527] Kamalakaran, 14.09.2018

[528] ibid

[529] ibid

[530] The INA was left wing, anti-British, and secular.

that riots have broken out "over here, as well as over there". (echoing *Garam Hava*, "The storm is there as well as here).[531] Suddenly there is a communal attack on Imtiaz Shah. Hukum Singh and Tapan Das attack the rioters and save Imtiaz. Shaken, all three drive to Imtiaz's home, to find that it burnt to the ground. Tapan, Himmat and a neighbour help Imtiaz flee Amritsar. Some of the most significant lines in the film are spoken as they stand in front of his razed home.

Tapan	Imtiaz bhai. You must go from here. When everything is all right again, I will myself come to Lahore to collect you. But for now, you must go.
Imtiaz	I will not come back from Lahore.
Tapan	Why do you say such a thing? Imtiaz bhai, you are India's captain!
Imtiaz	I WAS the captain. But now, my country is separate.

Unusually, this incident shows only the violence *against* the Muslims, this is a definitely a reconciliatory gesture.

In a conversation between two Muslim players, Sadiq has opted to go to Pakistan;

Shakoor	This way our team will fall apart, Sadiq *bhai*.
Sadiq	So what? There is a new country, there will be a new team. And there it will be just us.
Shakoor	Us?
Sadiq	I am not going alone, Shakoor. Others are coming too.
Shakoor	Yes, but there are millions who could have gone, but have chosen not to! What about them?
….	
	Sadiq *bhai*. Meerut is my home. My forefathers are buried here. And Meerut is in India. If a part of the country cuts itself off from India, how can that part ever be my country?

The Olympic teams arrive in England in 1948, the Indians are in the grounds when the Pakistanis arrive, we recognize Sajid, Imtiaz, and others. Himmat suddenly sees Imtiaz, and says under his breath "*Paahji* !" ("Elder Brother!") and gets up to greet him, but their Indian manager, Mehta, (the villain of the piece, apart from the British) pushes him back down. Imtiaz then calls out, "Himmat Singh - " in a bantering tone, not sure what response he will get. Himmat gets up with a huge smile, ignoring Mehta, and goes to embrace Imtiaz, as other Indian and Pakistani team members do the same. This incident shows the

[531] "Toofan vahan bhi, yahan bhi"

Pakistani (elder and senior) taking the first step, as opposed to the regular paternalistic pattern of India leading the way.

In the approximately 13.30 minutes showing the final match between India and England, the Pakistani players are shown 11 times, loudly cheering for India, the Pakistani captain Imtiaz shouting "Come On India!" Sadiq hesitates, but eventually cheers for India, also. The film is as much about winning from the erstwhile rulers as it is testimony to the bonds between India and Pakistan. The film shows Sameness, the fracture, the pain, and an healing Embrace.

I end this section on Sameness with *Sam Bahadur* (2023), a biography of Sam Manekshaw, Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army in 1971, when India defeated Pakistan in Bangladesh. In such a film it is remarkable that there is no vilification of Pakistan. Instinctively I would have put this film in the Military Enemy section of the hostile tropes, but this film is so much more than could be reduced by such a categorization. The film draws not just on the sameness, but the Oneness that existed, how despite war, despite "military-enmity" - unfinished business is still enmeshed in friendship and affection, not festering animosity. Some of this overlaps Director Meghna Gulzar's other very different film, *Raazi* 2018. According to Gen. Manekshaw's daughter, Maja Daruwala, Meghna Gulzar

> "was at pains to show the fellow feeling that existed and how the two identities had to be created because of the separation of the two nations which had never before that thought of themselves as alien, let alone as enemies. That came later and has been nurtured since." [532]

While *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973) establishes Pakistan as the Other, and shows the kin relationships only once they are severed, *Sam Bahadur* shows the friendships as they existed, and the bonds, even when there is a war being fought. And in Manekshaw's one line is a wealth of the emotion of unfinished business, as he says about Yahya, "We too, were friends."

At the IMA, Manekshaw and Tikka Khan (later a general in the Pakistan army) were known to be "boxing partners", although the film depicts some non-verbalised animosity.

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[532] Correspondence with Maja Daruwala, d/o Field Marshall Sam Manekshaw

This establishes commonalities when the Self and the Other were One and the Same. The film shows Manekshaw's friendship with Atique-ur-Rahman, (later a general in the Pakistan army), during the Burma campaign, Atique remembering the wonderful Parsi cuisine he had eaten in Manekshaw's house, and Manekshaw offering lifelong friendship. This is a step more than commonalities. But most remarkably, the film shows Manekshaw's friendship with Yahya, a familiar visitor at the Manekshaw home, dining with the family, calling Mrs. Manekshaw by her name, Silloo, and portraying a rare sensitivity. On a different occasion, Yahya says bitterly, "…. One should learn from the English how to extract a price -. What a price they have put on our freedom." This is showing the pain of the rupturing of the Self, in this case the pain is being expressed by the one who is becoming the Other. Yahya tells Manekshaw, "…. Jinnah has personally asked you to join the Pakistan army, so what have you decided? You're not a Hindu, so how are you an Indian?" Yahya is still considering Manekshaw his Own. Manekshaw simply replies, "Born in Amritsar, wife from Bombay, work in Delhi, how can I be more Indian?" Manekshaw knew his place, it was in India.

In 1969, Gen. Ayub's government was ousted by Gen. Yahya. Original footage of Yahya speaking is shown, but the moment he speaks in the film script, his language changes to formal Urdu, unlike anything he ever spoke. In the 1970 Pakistan elections, the Awami League swept East Pakistan, Bhutto refused to accept the decision, Mujeeb demanded equal rights, and the military operation began in East Pakistan. Refugees poured into India. The Indian army is extensively shown training the Mukti Bahini, India is shown openly and proudly doing in Bengal, what Pakistan is castigated for in Kashmir, although there is no articulation of this. The film shows Manekshaw's Urdu speech and air-dropped letter urging Pakistani troops to surrender, (the language speaks of that bygone Oneness), Bhutto's dramatics in the UN, and simply shows Yahya drinking. Other depictions of this time show Gen. Yahya in an debauched state, this film has maintained both its dignity and his.

This is director Meghna Gulzar's second (and very different) film in which she shows the Pakistan army, the first one being *Raazi* (2018). Though *Sam Bahadur* 2023, is made with the approval of the Indian army, the depiction of Pakistan in both films is sensitive and devoid of jingoism or villainizing. There is not just a reiteration of commonalities, but underlying the factual acceptance of the modern-day reality, there is a torment, more explicit in *Raazi,* more subtle in *Sam Bahadur***.** Three of the relationships shown in the

film are with people who eventually became Pakistanis and two of these were close friendships.

These films which foreground this poignant sameness are all touched with this torment, not just of the separation but of the tentacles of this long partition that has poisoned both the Self and the Other. Despite his far-sightedness, perhaps not even Sam Bahadur, like almost everyone who lived through that time, could have fathomed the extent of the rupture that was to come. These films hark on past commonalities, highlight present ones, and offer a friendship to move forward on the basis of this Sameness.

Representation of Pakistani women - Feisty Pakistani women

The representation of Pakistani women presents an interesting pattern. Mostly, the portrayal of Pakistani women is positive, even if the Pakistani authorities and the Pakistan Censor disagree. In different avatars, they are shown as feisty, patriotic, brave and beautiful. Often paired with non-Muslim men. In Pakistan, any Muslim woman marrying or having any liaison with a non-Muslim man is unacceptable, and also illegal, but in many parts of the world, including India, this may be viewed as positive and acceptable.

Woods discusses how the female Other can serve as a mediating figure, her femininity instilling in her a greater malleability than the male.[533] The Kashmiri woman helps Rishikumar in *Roja* (1992), against her brother and the militants, there is no romantic angle, but earlier her brother is shown striking her. Such portrayals also serve a negative purpose to reinforce the Muslim male Other as primitive in his attitude towards women. *Dil bole Hadippa* 2009, is one of the few films in which the Pakistanis are shown more positively in their attitude towards the woman cricketeer, in *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* Munni's menfolk are exceptionally gentle and loving, but this is definitely not the norm.

Three women ISI agents have been enacted by the three top heroines of Indian cinema, Deepika Padukone in *Pathaan* (2023), Katrina Kaif in *Ek tha Tiger* **(**2014), *Tiger Zinda*

[533] Woods, 78

hai (2017) and *Tiger-3* (2023) and Kareena Kapoor in *Agent Vinod* (2012). They are presented as patriotic, courageous, glamourous, "hot", on the side of the angels, willing to fight evil. While being glamourous and sexy may be unacceptable to conservatives; in the parlance of Indian Hindi cinema, this is definitely positive. They courageously fight for what is right, even against rogue elements in their own government, endangering themselves. While the Tiger series shows cooperation between the Indian and Pakistan governments, willing or unwilling, in both *Agent Vinod* and *Pathaan*, the Pakistani woman is cooperating with the Indian government and against an evil group in Pakistan, not against Pakistan itself. In *Pathaan*, she is tortured by the Indians as well, and her Indian male counterpart played by Shahrukh Khan, has a problematic relationship with his own masters, the Indian government. These three films are centred around the pair of the Indian male protagonist and the female Pakistani.

In *Hindustan ki kasam* (1999), it is the female reporter at the Prime Minister's press conference supports peace. In *Border Hindustan ka (*2003), the female protagonist is a feisty Pakistani, as is her grandmother, in *Veer-Zara* (2004), there are two such characters, Zara, and the lawyer, Saamiya. In *The Hero* (2003), the Pakistani women portrayed are Salman's mother, sophisticated and kind, and Col. Izhaq's mother, traditional, fierce, and masterful, allowing no man to take advantage of any woman. When Reshma, an Indian spy in the Pakistani military household is almost caught red-handed with the transmitter on her, Col. Izhaq's mother walks in as the men are body-searching her, and in an absolute fury, hits the man who's doing it, telling them that they have forgotten that in Islam, women have a high and protected status, how dare they molest this innocent girl. Enraged, she refuses to listen to the men.

In *Kabul Express* (2006), the Pakistani Talib/soldier says that his daughter did not wish to meet him anymore, as she said that he was a Talib, and Talib's force women and people to do things which they don't wish to do. In *1971* **(**2007), of good Pakistanis, three out of four are women, and all three are HRCP[534] activists, and tough women, and in real life, HRCP does have many prominent and dedicated women activists.

Ida, in *Lahore* 2010, is the sister of Noor, a Pakistani kickboxer, who fights Devinder of India, Noor deliberately kicks Devender after the final whistle, Devender dies. The

[534] Human Rights Commission of Pakistan

inquiry exonerates Noor, perhaps because India and Pakistan are desperately trying for better relations. Ida, who had earlier been friendly with Devender's family, and is now medic to the Pakistan team, comes to India to personally apologize to Devinder's family on behalf of Pakistan. She is an assertive, confident character, openly showing her interest in Verender. Similar to many contemporary women characters in Indian films, this may be done in a positive spirit. As a student she looked like any smart subcontinental girl, at an official dinner in Delhi, she – appropriately? – covers her head with a *duppata*.

In *Welcome 2 Karachi* **(**2015), the Pakistani intelligence officer, is a feisty woman, but so is a woman being delivered of a baby, in a family full of men with namaz caps and kohl-lined-eyes. In *Calendar Girls* (2015), the Pakistani model, Nazneen, an independent woman, says "Arre! Pakistani girls can be as bold as any other girl! Sometimes even more so!", but her Pakistani male partner is the stereotypical abusive Pakistani religious hypocrite. In *Mission Majnu* 2023, Nasreen, Indian "Tariq's" blind Pakistani wife, stands up to her father to marry Tariq. *Uri* 2019, also shows a Pakistani couple, spies for India, where the wife is definitely the more assertive of the two.

These films challenge the stereotypical view of Pakistani women encased in *purdah*; they are spirited; even covered, they are not so Othered, many Indian women also cover similarly, it is understood and acceptable. The note of caution here is that does this position the male Pakistani as the menacing Other, in fact dividing Pakistanis on gender lines?[535] There is definitely an element of this present in these portrayals, nevertheless, this positive presentation both reflects many real-life Pakistan women but also counters a possible extremist or conservative stereotype versus someone with whom it is possible to move forward. It is for this reason that from an enlightened, progressive, humanist, secular and feminist perspective I have made the conscious decision to classify this trope amongst the reconciliatory themes, and to take this positive presentation at face value, while at the same time, sounding the caution that this carries nuances of superiority and hierarchy, as well as of divisiveness, on grounds expanded in detail in theory stemming from Spivak to Beydoun.[536]

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[535] Extrapolating from Spivak 1988, and Beydoun, 2021. For a further discussion on this dilemma in Indian Hindi cinema see also Communalism Combat, February 2005, Year 11, No.105, Cover Story 3.
[536] ibid

Refusing to demonize Pakistan/Finding another Other

Pakistan is the automatic go-to Other for Hindi cinema. Films which don't want to fall into this trap have to go to considerable lengths to find someone ELSE to Other. The British are the natural choice, right from *Dharmputra* (1961), director Yash Chopra unequivocally lays the blame for Partition on Britain, but also on right-wing Hindus. Even in *Gadar* (2001) where Pakistan is definitely the modern day villain, the British are a root cause. There are also more elaborate Others, starting from *Main hoon na* (2004) where it is rogue Indians, and even *Ek tha Tiger* (2012) where it is RAW itself, and ISI, to *Mission Kashmir* (2000), *Lamhaa* (2010), *Pathaan* (2023) in which international terrorist networks rather than Pakistan are the villains, in *Fiza* (2000), *Insaan* (2005) and *Agent Vinod* (2012) it is international business interests, in *Happy New Year* (2014**)**, it is North Korea, in *Dishoom* (2016) it is a mythical Middle Eastern country. *Dhishoom* (2016) as well as *Phir bhi dil hai Hindustani* (2000), show how Pakistan is scapegoated, and in *Phir bhi dil hai Hindustani* (2000) and *Bangistan* (2015), it is local politicians who are the villains. In an excess of confidence in *Tiger Zinda hai* (2017) and *Parmanu* (2018), it is the US that is the Other for India. In *Tiger Zinda hai* (2017), it is the common Other for India AND Pakistan, and in a lighter vein*, Street-Dancer* (2020) and *Total Siyyapa* (2014) it is the sub-continentals against the British. *Sam Bahadur* (2023), through Yahya Khans words, and Sardar Patel's words, holds the British culpable.

Earth 1947 **(**1999) too clearly lays the blame on the British and "the politicians", and in *Hey Ram* (2000), on Direct Action Day, 1946, in Calcutta, Saket Ram telephones an English official, reporting the horrific violence on the street. The official pompously refuses to get involved in "local affairs". "The Hindus," he says, "want us to get out altogether. The Muslims want us to give them the country. Phone the Congress office, or even perhaps Mr. Mahatama Gandhi….." and takes no responsibility. In *Gold* (2018), the British are the villains at every level, racist and divisive.

In *Mission Kashmir* (2000)**,** one of the terrorist sponsors says to their leader Hilal, "We have nothing to do with any government. We have an independent army and are fighters for freedom." Given the Kashmir situation, this omission has to be seen as a positive for Pakistan (from the Indian point of view). Similarly in *Indian* (2001), the terrorist is from Lashkar-i-Jihadi, not having a Pakistani connection. In *Insaan* **(**2005), Pakistan is only mentioned on passing, in the context of how young Muslim men suffering violence and

discrimination become tools of people who profit from violence, and this is against the well-being of both countries.

Kabul Express **(**2006) humanizes the common Pakistani soldier, and also the Pushtoon, who is shown as jealous of the camaraderie between the Indians and the Pakistani enemy. The biggest Other is the Pakistan Army/government. The Americans are also Othered, but the film also creates another, unwarranted, Other, the Hazaras. Khyber,[537] the Afghan, says that if they are not blown up by the Americans, the Hazaras will get them, the Hazaras being "Afghanistan's largest"[538] and most dangerous clan/tribe, who are "criminal and viciously cruel". This theme is repeated many times. Firstly, this is incorrect. The Hazaras are less than 10 percent of the population, the Pashtuns are by far the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan.[539] The Hazaras portrayed in the film could have been chosen as examples of the least Hazara-looking people, most Hazara's have a distinct appearance, they are Mongols. A persecuted and victimized community, [540] originally from Hazarajat in Afghanistan, they are spread over Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, and speak Dari, a Persian variant. Hazaras have been massacred in both Pakistan and Afghanistan, by mobs and the establishment, this film too, Others them, humanizing the Pathaans at their expense. Perhaps a reminder that many top film industry people are Khans, and like to trace their lineage to the "noble warrior" Pushtoons. Incongruously, in the film, the Hazaras are portrayed as Pakistan's allies; Pakistan's allies have always been Sunni Pushtoons. The film blames the Hazaras for extremism and fundamentalism; the majority of Hazaras are Shia, and in this region fundamentalist extremism is practiced more *against* the Shias. Pakistan considers the Hazaras too Shia and too pro-Iran. In its attempt to humanize the Pushtoons, the film has demonstrated a surprising lack of understanding of Afghanistan's ethnic politics, considering that director Kabir Khan knows Afghanistan. The Hazaras staged protests against the film, and it was banned in Afghanistan for its racist portrayal of this community.

In *War Chhod Na Yaar* (2013), the reporter says, "This is the truth that the common people of India and Pakistan have always felt. The superpowers are using us and making fools of us." The film shows a mass campaign in both countries to boycott Chinese food

[537] Interestingly, this actor, Hanif Humdum was a Syed Hazara
[538] Puri-Mirza, 12.09.2022
[539] World Atlas, no date
[540] Not to be confused with the Hazara district of Pakistan

and Chinese products. There is comment on how India-Pak hostilities keep up the demand for weapons, and demonstrations and comments demanding that India and Pakistan should not be at war.

Parmanu (Atom) **(**2018) is about the testing of India's nuclear bomb. The film shows the bomb being tested as a reaction to the role of international policeman being commandeered by the US, not anything to do with Pakistan. The rival is America, not Pakistan, the Pakistani spy is presented more sympathetically than the American. An interesting sequence in the film is when the wind is blowing towards Pakistan. Rather than endanger the Pakistani villages, the bomb team delay and jeopardise their test. There was no way one could miss the magnanimity.

In *Uri* (2019), the main terrorist is Al-Baghdadi, an Arab name or a nom-de-guerre, not a Pakistani name. This keeps in the consciousness that it is not just Indians and Pakistanis – perhaps brothers under the skin – who are foolishly enemies, there is a "foreign element" muddying the waters too – however there IS ALSO a Pakistani terrorist, who is also killed, in short, the blame is not ONLY on the foreign terrorists.

Finally, both *Phir bhi dil hai Hindustani* (2000) (without naming Pakistan), and *Dhishoom* (2016) show how Pakistan is used as a scapegoat, by other vested interests interested in promoting violence.

Given that both for film-making convenience and in reality, Pakistan is India's "bad guy", the choice not to portray Pakistan but find someone else to be the bad-guy must be viewed as an positive effort NOT to Other Pakistan. The decision not to name Pakistan and to singly or jointly find Another Other can be viewed as reconciliatory.

Conclusion

After having examined introspective tropes, hostile tropes, ambiguous tropes, in the empirical chapters, we find that it is the reconciliatory tropes that have enough variety to be discussed over two final chapters. In the first of the chapters on the Reconciliatory tropes, and in the light of the previous 3 chapters, we find that Sameness is perhaps the most pervasive trope of all. Sameness can be weaponized to deny the Other his identity,

as a denial of Pakistan, but is also a trope used for acceptance, so sameness has many aspects. In this chapter, these moments of Sameness discussed above, tend to be moments of sweetness and empathy even when in hostile movies like Gadar (2001), or patronizing films like *War Chhod Na Yaar* (2013), or comedies like *Welcome 2 Karachi* (2015). This Sameness offers reconciliation through a common culture and ethics, a sharing of identity, without decimating the Other's identity. Most such films start from a non-threatening premise, there is an acceptance of the current reality, the commonalities follow naturally, and the discovery of these commonalities establishes a familiar Sameness, which sometimes comes as a surprise, both Sameness and difference are treated with interest and respect.

This brings us to the final empirical chapter, a progression and extension of this reconciliatory chapter, but which moves beyond a simple acceptance or a simple recognition of a deliberate sameness to more active and final reconciliation.

Chapter 7 – Reconciliatory Tropes: Peace and Embrace

Peace

This chapter extends from the last chapter, as both essentially explore tropes which portray a positive ethos of Sameness and conciliation. But whereas the last chapter elaborated tropes which used Sameness to signify an acceptance of a peaceful coexistence, this chapter concentrates on portrayals that imply or lead to a more active reconciliation and Embrace. Such portrayals are more proactive. This completes the discussion of both the complementary tropes begun in the last chapter, and also the full gamut of all the different kinds of tropes that have been identified in this thesis.

There is a strong relationship between the two tropes of "We are the same people", (Sameness) and the "We need Peace (between us) (Peace)", they are often interwoven. In the Indo-Pakistan context, we are the same people often comes first, but it may or may not lead into a desire for peace and harmony. Sometimes, "We are the same people", can be an aggressive owning, a weaponizing of Sameness, denying the Other the right to an identity, or the right to assert difference, to air legitimate grievances, a denial rather than an embrace.

This is not what I am looking at in this section, I will be looking at where, "We are the same" is presented in an environment of acceptance perhaps leading onto an embrace. Nearly every film that talks of peace, evokes Sameness. This is not Peace between two different peoples, who share a common humanity, but Peace with your own. Occasionally, there is lip service to peace. This trope like all others, is presented through different genres of film. I will discuss first the films which foreground this Peace trope, secondly, the films for which this is an important but secondary or tertiary mention, the main story having a different focus, and last the films for which it is a peripheral mention.

Henna, a passionate appeal for peace, burst on the scene in 1991. The script is principally credited to Khawaja Ahmad Abbas, a well-known left-wing/progressive Indian Muslim writer, committed to Hindu-Muslim unity. The tenor of this film is that before this line on a piece of paper, all was idyllic, challenging the foundation for the creation of Pakistan.

The movie holds that although there is no good reason for Pakistan to exist, because only harmony existed before, for this self-same reason, now that Pakistan is a reality, we need to reclaim that harmony to move forward out of this destructive hatred. This is different to the earlier *Dharmputra* (1961), which forthrightly tackled the complex issues which led to Pakistan. *Henna* is in favour of Pakistanis and accepts Pakistan. Although it is against the idea of Pakistan, that is secondary to the message that we need peace.

Ultimately, Henna, a young Pakistani girl, is killed in crossfire. Chandar orates over Henna's body, "So many bullets to kill this innocent child….. Was she killed by a Pakistani bullet? Or an Indian bullet? …. We can all live in peace and happiness on this land…. stop it, stop it, stop it …..!"

Refugee (2000) was released in June, the Kargil war had taken place the year before, and in 2000, Gen. Musharaff, considered the architect of Kargil, came to power in a coup in Pakistan. Written, directed, and produced by JP Dutta, known for his "patriotic action war films", it seems as it was written by 2 different writers. The first part is philosophical and questioning, both of identity and belongingness, and the second part is cut-and-dried with a question left hanging in an entirely modernist context. Athique says, in the context of borders, "the border is transgressed in the first part of the film and then affirmed in the second." [541] It is one of the few films that (in the first part) challenges the concepts of nation and country. Two cross-border relationships are elaborated, the first between Raghuveer of the Indian BSF and Ashraf of the Pakistan Rangers, so representatives of their states, the second between Refugee, an Indian Muslim who helps people cross the border illegally, and Nazneen, an illegal Bihari refugee in Pakistan, common people.

A conversation between Ashraf, and Refugee;

Ashraf	You know that you do not have any right even to be standing where you are now.
Refugee	Why not? Is this not part of God's land?
Ashraf	So that is why you take migrants from this side to that and that side to this?
Refugee	Is it a sin to guide wandering travellers to their destinations? ….. I only know this, that in these desert sands, the difficult road that God has made, is for his people to come and go.
Ashraf	So you do not recognize any law? You do not recognize any border? You do not recognize Pakistan and India?

[541] Athique, 2008, 29

Refugee	There may be Hindustan and Pakistan, *Sahib*. I don't see any difference.
Ashraf	…. there is no difference between Indians and Pakistanis?
Refugee	There may be, *Sahib*. But I do not understand it. …. My father and his brother used to live together. Brothers. My uncle came to live here …. does that mean that they are no longer brothers?

When one of the Pakistani Rangers, Tauseef molests one of the illegal women refugees, Ashraf, severely reprimands him, saying he has shamed his comrades, and apologizes, portraying a moral Pakistani officer with a code of ethics. Jan Muhhammad, the Indian Muslim village headman, remembers the sweetness of relationships, now ruined by "these politicians, these people in army uniforms, they neither let us live, nor do they let them live."

A group that Refugee leads from Pakistan to India turn out to be terrorists, who unleash a wave of violence in India. At a regular official meeting, Raghuveer politely accuses Pakistan of sponsoring terrorism in India. Ashraf replies that Pakistan has suffered much more from terrorism, reminding Indian and Pakistani audiences of this fact. Raghuveer warns that revenge will only lead to bloodshed on both sides. Ashraf responds that both countries need to stop these enemies of humanity; terrorists are just guns for hire, the real enemies are those who fund them, those who sell weapons of war, planes worth crores which drop bombs on each other, when so many schools and hospitals could be built with this. Tangled in small acrimonies, people do not understand that the real enemies are hunger, poverty and helplessness.

Refugee and Nazneen wishing to make a home together, think of the border as an enemy; long to erase it like a line in a school copybook. Poetically they talk about the wind that touches one on this side, and become the others breath on the other side, the stream whose water they both drink is likened to their kiss, no border stops the wind or the streams or the birds,

> Borders are for Man
> Thought up by you and by me.
> What have we gained
> by being Men

Circumstances force them to elope, Nazneen's parents ask Ashraf, to recover her. With the full might of a Pakistan flag behind him, Nazneen and Refugee are brought to Ashraf

with their hands tied. The Pakistani Rangers beat the bound Refugee, breaking his legs more ruthlessly than the Indian BSF had done. In India the near-dead Refugee is found by the BSF, and is in custody in an army hospital;

Raghuveer	Who did this to you?
Refugee	Like you, soldiers on the other side.
Raghuveer	Hmmmm, the Rangers. If with every step you take you break their laws, then they will surely break your legs…
….	
	…. isn't it true that you bring terrorists from that side to this?
Refugee	I did once, yes. Thinking that they were ordinary refugees.
Raghuveer	How would you know, indeed. …. Do you know what they did the next day? They blew up trains. and buses. and buildings. Hundreds of people were blown up, men, women, children, young, old, each and every one of them your own, your compatriots. …. Do you not hear their screams? Did the tinkle of coins make you deaf to the howling of the children?
Refugee	Enough. I ask your forgiveness. …..
	Kill me, sahib,. …. Unknowingly I have committed a terrible sin.
Raghuveer	… Cowards ask for death …. Help us to finish these terrorists, that is the brave thing to do.

Refugee joins the BSF, he is training, learning shooting. From a wild unsettled philosopher, roaming the desert at will, he is transformed into modern man, limited to his role and his confines. He thanks Raghuveer for teaching him how to shoot, and the difference between right and wrong. In Pakistan, Nazneen is pregnant with Refugee's child. To make amends, Ashraf offers to take Nazneen to an Indian shrine, and conspires with Raghuveer to reunite Nazneen and Refugee. They meet dramatically, the marriage is solemnized, as the celebrations end, Nazneen goes into labour at the milestone designating the border. This is one crisis that the BSF and the Rangers even jointly cannot solve, in panic they get help from burqa-clad women devotees. The child is born at the stroke between 14th and 15th August. They discuss whether the child is Indian or Pakistani;

Raghuveer	…. where the child was born is neither India nor Pakistan, it's No Man's-Land….
Ashraf	…..which can also be called an international border – he will be a citizen of the world, this child….
Raghuveer	He will be bridge of Love, he will make a new "…stan" for himself – which will have no borders and no limitations, from where no

one will be forbidden to come and to go, and this new homeland will be called Insaniyatistan (Humanistan)

Together No passport! No visa!!

Whereas *Henna* (1991) ends in tragedy, *Refugee's* (1999) improbable ending, aided by two officials, one from either side, is a happy one.

Ek tha Tiger is light hearted in tone, its philosophy is subtle, unexpected from Salman Khan, adored on both sides of the border, who plays Tiger, a RAW agent. Tiger is investigating an Indian Professor at Trinity College, Dublin, whose crucial work is somehow ending up in Pakistani hands. Zoya, a British TCD student of "Indian-origin", housekeeps for the Professor. Later she turns out to be of Pakistani origin, once again highlighting the impossibility of telling the difference. Initially her nationality is not mentioned but it is clear from her father's name that she is Muslim. On one occasion she laughs at Tiger for being a "typical desi[542] man", this word expresses not just Sameness, – but the exact locale of being "desi", ie subcontinental, South- Asian.

Predictably, they fall in love, but before Tiger can declare his love, in a shocking and murderous encounter, he learns that Zoya is an ISI agent, and everything ends. Months later, they rendezvous at a diplomatic conference, one of the leaders of the Pakistani delegation is "Captain Ibrar", highlighting the role of the military in Pakistan's government. Zoya tells Tiger, that although she loves him, "I'm ISI and you're RAW. We are enemies.". His reply is "God knows how long our countries will keep fighting. We can't wait for them endlessly." Next day, both are missing. His mentor and boss, "Shenoy Sir" rages: "Do you know how many countries there are in the world? 201. And that bloody Tiger can only find a Pakistani girl for himself!", implying that the status of Pakistan is special to India, even if it is special in a negative way.

Eventually discovered, the ISI captures Zoya. Tiger contacts Gopi to make a deal, if the RAW team help rescue Zoya from "our friends" (the ISI), she will give RAW information. Gopi is incredulous at his cheek. "You want that we should engage with the ISI in Cuba, to kidnap some girl?" Tiger reproachfully says, " 'Some girl', Gopi? In Dublin you were going '*bhabi-bhabi'* [543] but as soon as you discover she's a Pakistani,

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[542] This inclusive word refers to "sub-continentals", Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and occasionally other "brown people" in the South Asian region

[543] "*bhabi* "is an affectionate and respectful term for brother's wife

she suddenly becomes 'some girl'?" Gopi looks a little abashed. It is not just Zoya and Tiger who are a couple, but Tiger is establishing her as kin now to Gopi too. Tiger uses RAW to free Zoya, before they both escape again, as he knows perfectly that she has no intention of betraying her country. RAW and ISI teams chase them, at one iconic moment, both agencies are standing together shooting at their common enemy. Even they realize the incongruity, as each looks at the other before wordlessly complementing each other in cutting off the escape route. Tiger and Zoya fly off into the unknown, as Gopi stands with a defeated countenance, with Ibrar alongside, similarly defeated.

A postscript scene shows a phone call between "Shenoy Sir", in Delhi, and Tiger in some unrecognizable location. Shenoy bites out the words, "To love the enemy is treachery". "Sir, when I started to love, no one told me she was the enemy. And once I had fallen in love, I could not understand WHY she was the enemy." Shenoy has nothing to say but, "Tiger, how long can you keep running?" Tiger replies, "Sir, till the day India and Pakistan no longer need RAW and ISI. That day we'll come back." Shenoy's deadpan reply is "Good Luck". The film ends with the narration, "RAW and ISI are still looking for Zoya and Tiger. In their history this is perhaps the first time that these two agencies have done a mission together." Both protagonists are shown as honourable, and the two state spy agencies are shown as mirrors of each other.

Bharat (2019) is a beautiful story encompassing kinship and peace. Using the train – almost a trope in itself – it shows a train full of slaughtered Muslims arriving in Pakistan, so a mirror image of the usual portrayal. This spurs Hindus to leave, for fear of Muslim retaliation. The story that concerns us is about people, often children, left behind, and one child in particular. It shows how thousands were affected by this and still are. 50 years after Partition, this child and her family rediscover each other. She was adopted, and is a Pakistani Muslim, they are Indian Hindus. There is an embrace leading to a future of acceptance and love.

In this era of Love-jihad and anti-Romeo squads, the rom-com *Indoo ki jawani* (2020) deals head-on with Indo-Pakistan, establishing sameness and commonalities, and represents a positive desire for peace. Samar, the non-stereotypical Pakistani protagonist is the only sane character in a madhouse, an unusual and bold portrayal, which elicited

much ire.[544] He is balanced by two Pakistani terrorists, one Indian police officer with a sterling character but a small role, and the giddy Indira, who is confused at discovering her blind date is a Pakistani.

When a trendy Pakistani terrorist arrives, again militating against the "jihadi" stereotype, he tells them, "While you two scoring points off each other, I'm the one who benefits! …. Since Partition, India and Pakistan have been busy fighting each other, and the benefit goes to some third party!" Samar attacks the terrorist, and when Indoo gets hold of the gun; Samar begs her to throw it away, as "the root of this whole problem is this gun …. (That's why) …. we are fighting, like two idiots. …. If this didn't exist, how would we fight and kill each other – the problem is not between the three of us, the problem is in the gun."

Indoo throws the gun away; the much-maligned police arrive. Indoo tells them an expurgated history; Samar is a Pakistani who had saved her. The police officer says, "Well, when an Indian and a Pakistan start developing something good with each other, someone or the other appears with a gun." He tells Indoo's nosy neighbours, "…. These two neighbours …. will sort things out." As Samar and Indira move in for a kiss, the bell rings, and Indoo hustles Samar out. The film ends. There is rapprochement and good common sonight ense, and thus far is far enough.

I will backtrack to *Main hoon na* (2004) (Don't worry) I am here), one of the most successful Indian films ever.[545] . After the introduction, the first sentence has the word Pakistan in it. *Main hoon na* (2004) deals head on with the fact that there is an India-Pakistan conflict, and 55 years of enmity. It "essays portrayals of Pakistan that are rather more neutral if not more positive." [546] It was "a conscious attempt to move away from the depiction of Pakistan as the constant wrong-doer sole villain."[547] From a critical Pakistani point of view it is still India leading the way and Pakistan following. The film actively supports the idea of India taking a unilateral initiative, "and, later in the film, Pakistan also follows suit." [548] India does so, because of its own morals, without transaction or negotiation; Pakistan responds immediately in good faith. India too has had

[544] See imdb user reviews for the film *Indoo ki jawani* (2020)
[545] THE top film in 2004 after *Veer-Zara.*
[546] Bharat and Kumar, 2008, x
[547] Dudrah, 2008, 43
[548] Dudrah, 2008, 44

to be persuaded to this, there is opposition, and a price to be paid for supporting this initiative. The film looks introspectively at Indian society and the divisions within, and is perhaps the only film in this context which takes a principled stand against revenge, often seen as a noble justification for violence. Weaker victims of communal violence are often encouraged to forgive and forget and move on (*Road to Sangam*-2010, *Mission Kashmir*-2000, *Yahan*-2005, *Lamhaa*-2010, *Roja*-1992) but this film exhorts India, (as well as Raghavan, the antagonist), as more powerful and superior, to unilaterally also be more generous.

The message of the story is "Project Milaap[549]"; it occupies a quarter of the film or less, the rest is *masala*. "Project Milaap" is a brainchild of the Indian army, a step towards peace. Pakistani and Indian fishermen are often caught in the waters of each other's countries by the coastguards, imprisoned on suspicion of being spies, and often brutally interrogated. Because these are "people of no consequence", little is done for them by either government. Every few years some are exchanged, but many spend years in prison. In the film, the Indian government will return 50 fishermen to Pakistan. The architects of this initiative are the Indian army chief, Gen. Bakshi, and Brigadier Sharma. The meeting at which this is broadcast, is attacked by Indian army renegades, who are furious at this gesture of reconciliation. The renegade leader had been court-martialled and dismissed for having deliberately killed a dozen innocent Pakistani civilians. The film is also an accolade to the Indian army.

After much irrelevant masala, Pakistan responds saying they too will release 50 fishermen. The Pakistani general says "They are showing so much friendship; we are also not so ungenerous. My only regret is why it wasn't us who extended this hand of friendship first." Bakshi and Major Raj are delighted, "Like us, Pakistan too, want peace." The film culminates with a spectacularly dramatic piece of fight action - cutting in and out of the poignant and contrasting scenes of successful Project Milaap. In the barren sands, in the middle of nowhere, the first man that gets out of the government bus is a small, poor, elderly man in rags. All those waiting too, for all their colours, are poor and weatherbeaten. The generals are here too, in their starched and resplendent uniforms, but the moment belongs to the people of the coloured rags, as old mothers meet grown sons who meet children they have never seen, brothers and fathers, and we are reminded what

[549] Milaap means meeting/union

the story is really about. The last heavily symbolic scene is beautifully described and analysed by Dudrah. [550]

Raazi (2018) is a film that leaves all the questions for the audience to answer for themselves. The film is a litany of betrayal. Friendship, love, trust, family, duty, simple goodness and humanity, every human value is sacrificed at the feet of the deity of Patriotism. A Kashmiri Muslim RAW agent, Hidayat, dying of cancer, proposes his daughter Sehmat, as his replacement, and marries her off to the Iqbal, the officer son of a Pakistani brigadier, whom Hidayat had befriended in order to spy on the Pakistan army. Sehmat is now even better placed to carry on his good work. Hidayat is not just willing to give the life of his child, but is prostituting his child for his patriotism. Sehmat kills and betrays in every possible way, her loving in-laws, who trust her, a child, her parents-in-law, and her young husband, all for the greater glory of her country. A story of agonizing choices and the personal horror of war, not just the bloody barbarity of the battlefield and broken bodies. The Pakistani family is shown in a human and positive light. Kashmir, Bangladesh, killing, human relationships and nuclear weapons are not moral questions but matters of patriotism. For patriotism, this film shows, militates against all human virtues. There is a ruthless paralyzing bureaucracy, and somehow the Indian discourse on Bangladesh sounded very similar to the Pakistani one on Kashmir.

One comment in the film says that a Pakistani and an Indian can never be friends, their patriotism militates against their friendship. A tragic comment to make without challenge; in fact Indians and Pakistanis are not just friends, but parents, children, siblings and more. Indian Sehmat and Pakistani Iqbal had a son. This child of two torn and destroyed human beings, should at least have ended up as a raging peace campaigner. Sadly, he joins the Indian army. Such films also fuel the paranoia against Indians married to Pakistanis.

Is the film a glorification of sacrifice or a prayer for peace? In either case, the result of Indo-Pakistan hostility is just “the horror, the horror”.

Hindustan ki kasam **(**1999) and *Ulajh* (2024) both have a similar story, if a very different style. In both, the Pakistani Prime minister visits India for a peace mission, and Pakistani extremists consider that killing him on Indian soil will destroy all hopes for peace, (which

[550] Dudrah, 2008, 46

is what they want); in *Tiger-3* (2023) too , the peace-inclined Pakistani Prime Minister is to be killed, but in Pakistan. In *Hindustan ki kasam (1999)*, although the Pakistani PM is "good", the "bad-guys" are evil fanatical Pakistanis, and they are the only other Pakistanis that we see. An eccentric Kabira, who declaims on Life and the Nation in an Old Testament Prophet style, is a motif. The original Kabir was a wandering Muslim Sufi poet-of-the-people, a weaver, venerated by Hindus and Muslims. Incongruously, in the film, Kabira is also an Indian army officer…. "What is this hunger that is not for bread but for borders?! . …. No person in any country wants war. When a country goes to war, their land does not grow crops, it grows hunger…. Cut off the hands that give away these weapons of death. ….. save the millions in both these two countries, those who want peace and brotherhood. In 1947, the line that was drawn like a wound on the bosom of our motherland, now is the time to let this wound heal with love, friendship and brotherhood." The two brothers reconcile, but the Pakistani terrorist brother dies in his long-lost mother's arms. In *Ulajh* (2024) the saboteurs are Pakistani extremists collaborating with Indian corruption. The tone of *Hindustan ki kasam* (1999) is entirely paternalistic, I have included it in this section; it foregrounds India-Pakistan peace, but India is hagiographed, while there is not a single good Pakistani other than the lonely Prime Minister.

These were some films that foreground peace, but equally important are those films in which Peace is one of the strands. *Ao ab laut challen* **(**1999) is a stereotypical complicated Hindi-cinema story. The Pakistan-India connection is a conscious aside about the commonality of South-Asia. Rohan arrives in the US and asks a taxi driver if he is an Indian. The taxi driver replies, "When the map was one, yes, I was also an Indian. After that when the border came in between, I became a Pakistani, you became an Indian." Homeless, Rohan is offered hospitality by this new Pakistani friend/*bhai,* who lives with an Indian, they jointly own the house. The Pakistani is cheerful, the Indian grumpy and stingy, and the heroine ties a *rakhee* on both. The film is nostalgic and reconciliatory, and full of cliches such as, "languages are different but man is the same everywhere". The Indian sings to the Pakistani. "Embrace me for I am your shadow."

Dil bole Hadippa **(**2009) is about a woman cricketeer. After introducing her, the film moves to the Wagah border on 15th August. Peace is introduced in the guise of two friends whose friendship borders could not erase, Vicky Singh and Lucky Khan, now two middle-aged men. They institute the Aman (Peace) Cup, and meet every year on 14/15

August to play cricket. Pakistan consistently wins. In India, Veera dresses as a boy, and gets selected to the Indian team. When she is "outed" during the match, the villainous Pakistani captain (and the film) redeem themselves by being the first to clap for her. As do the *burqah*-clad Pakistani women and the men in their prayer caps, an unlikely cricket match audience! - the match ends with Indians and Pakistanis embracing, Vicky says, "This is victory for India and Pakistan, victory for Peace." And the Indian and Pakistani flags flutter together, side by side.

Bhaag Milkha Bhaag (2012), is another sports film, and more. Based on the life of Indian athlete Milkha Singh, a major part of his story is that he came as an orphaned child-refugee to Delhi from a Pakistani village, after surviving the massacres of Partition, and became a national hero. The other part of the story, which concerns us, centres on his horrific childhood-memories of the Partition massacres, and his healing childhood friendship. The film is about the reality of moving on, a pragmatic reconciliation, which can also bring unexpected joy.

In the real-life 1954 Asian Games, Abdul Khaliq from Pakistan won the gold medal in the 100 metre race. The then Indian Prime Minister Nehru, gave him the nom d' plume, The Flying Bird of Asia. What the film shows are the Indo-Pak Friendship games in 1960 ("To promote peace and harmony between both countries"), for which Milkha Singh is selected as leader of the Indian contingent. Initially, he refuses to go to Pakistan. and tells Nehru, "Sir, the blood of my father is in the air of that land. How will I breathe there?" Nehru replies gently, "For the sake of your country …. even if you have to fight a battle with yourself". So Milkha runs the race, and wins it, and Ayub Khan, President of Pakistan, says, "*Beta*, today you didn't run. You flew! Pakistan is proud to give you the title of The Flying Sikh!" bringing a beautiful and completely uncomplicated smile to Milkha's face.

Before this race, Milkha privately makes a trip to his native village. There, horrific memories of the Partition massacre of his family crowd his brain, he breaks down. A small child there tries to calm him. Then as he sees Milkha's face, the child runs home and brings back a framed newspaper/magazine picture of an adult Milkha Singh running, and asks if he's the same man. Milkha is bewildered, but the child's father approaches and asks the same question. It is Sampreet, Milkha's childhood best-friend. He was adopted by the Muslim village schoolmaster. Taking Milkha to their house, Sampreet's

wife welcomes him and after some hesitation Milkha calls her "*bhabi*". Sampreet says to his son, "Your *chacha* will run at the Asian Games." These are all kin-words, re-embracing relationships. They are shown later in the stadium cheering for Indian Milkha Singh.

An effective and underplayed film. Sadly, the scenes with the Pakistani runner Khaliq, take away from some of this. The film pays a passing tribute to Abdul Khaliq as "the fastest man in Asia", but doesn't mention it was Nehru who called him "The Flying Bird of Asia", (Ayub was simply returning the favour). Khaliq is shown as surly and nasty. This is in contrast to how he is remembered in his village; a local political leader said, "I respect Milkha Singh, …. but I felt a pain while watching the movie." [551] Khaliq was a 1971 POW in India, and his family recounts that he was treated there with much respect and offered an early release, which he declined. In the film, his manager too, is shown as a nasty character. Since so much of the film is fictionalized (including presumably the manager and Khaliq's personality), a more neutral attitude if not actually a more positive one, as was shown by both political leaders at that time, would have established a more friendly tone. Perhaps the film makers felt that showing them as negative would avoid repercussions? So the rapprochement is with Sampreet, but Khaliq and his manager are the necessary bad Pakistanis. This is in contrast to *Gold* **(**2018), where Pakistanis and Indians are shown as totally supportive of each other, the difference being that they were not in direct competition. This unnecessary and perhaps even incorrect depiction of the Pakistanis as surly and jealous, detracted from an otherwise fine film.

Lal Singh Chadda (2022) too is about friendship.[552]. One hour into the film, Laal's unit is sent to Kargil, where by accident, this simple lad saves the life of an enemy, mistaking him for an Indian. This enemy has a double leg amputation and disappears. Years later they meet. Paaji says he tried to "go home", but couldn't. He tells Lal, "I was The Enemy, you fool. I had come to kill you … and be killed. ….. My enemy carried me on his shoulders. To save this legless torso." Laal and Paaji start a business together; eventually they are featured together as Entrepreneurs of the Year. When 26/11 happens, Paaji decides to go home. "I was told that there are enemies here. …. Then I met you. I tried to kill you but you saved me. I thought it was the enemy's country, but I found a friend.

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[551] Dhakku, 2013
[552] Acknowledged adaptation of *Forest Gump* (1994)

….We are misguided, taught enmity. I want to go back and start a school, and teach children about friends like you." And Paaji goes home to Pakistan to teach Peace.

No one killed Jessica **(**2011) is about a real murder in Delhi, the main story has nothing to do with Pakistan. The protagonist is Meera, a journalist. In the first words in the film, Meera talks of three moments in time when she has seen India united. The cricket world cup, the Kargil war, and Jessica's murder. Of the first twenty seven sentences in the film, eight are about Pakistan/Kargil. After the Jessica's murder, we cut to military funerals in Kargil. An Indian soldier says "It is painful. Whether it's one of theirs or one of ours. A human being is a human being." Another says, "…. If we don't kill them, they will kill us." The Indian soldiers express satisfaction at their victory; but mourn the loss of life, on both sides, and question what the governments will do to stop this. Instead of enmity, fellow-feeling is established for the common helplessness of ordinary soldiers against the commonality of governments. Meera reports, ". …. not only have Indian soldiers lost their lives, Pakistani soldiers too have been killed. There is now an important question before both these countries. Was this war necessary?" Showing Meera in Kargil is shorthand to establish that Jessica's death was of equal national importance as the deaths of so many young men in an India Pakistan war, and that it required as much guts to report on this event as on the war in Kargil.

Finally, I look at two films which are largely hostile, but in which the peace trope can still be found. In *Gadar* **(**2001) the aristocratic Sakina had been kind to the cheerful lorry driver Tara in better days, he adores her from afar. During Partition, his family is butchered, and he joins a retaliatory killing mob, when suddenly he recognizes Sakina, and rescues her. Her family have apparently all been killed. He tries to make things comfortable for her, and escorts her to the border himself. But at the border, she chooses not to leave him. He takes her to meet his family, but they are furious, she is from the community who have killed their family.

> Tara Uncle, …. Hatred only creates ashes, of homes, of hearts, of countries. I too, had hatred and a sword in my hand, and if Love hadn't found me, I too would be ashes by now.

This is different to an aggressive one-ness, it is done with love, and initially, with diffidence. It is Sakina's decision to stay with Tara. Yet many Muslims and Pakistanis do see this as an aggressive suffocation of their otherness, an inverse love-jihad, it is

anathema to both communities that "their" women should be linked to men from the other community, a matter of serious dishonour. In India there were Muslim protests against the film.[553]

Border (1997), is a well-known war/anti-war film, Pakistan is a military enemy. During the end-credits, the iconic anti-war song, "My enemy, my brother…" starts midway, we go from the devastated battle field to the devastated families of the soldiers whose stories we had glimpsed; a pregnant wife, a waiting bride-to-be, a war widow with an only son, a dying woman with two small children, two old parents with a leaking roof. Athique points out, "There is a very obvious discontinuity arising from the shooting down of the infiltrators and the relish with which it is presented, when this event is set against the "peace message" that serves as the denouement of the film." An exercise in contradictions, peace seems tacked on as an afterthought, but this powerful song brought it to the fore.

> War lasts but a few days,
> Life weeps then for countless years.
> ….
> Villages burn in silence
> ….
> The wounded agitated land
> Bomb-blackened fields
> ….
> All around us is mourning
>
> My enemy, my brother, my neighbour
> These burning houses, the black smoke,
> These images of destruction
> speak
> to me and to you, to us both.
> ……
> The breeze spreads the smell of death
> ……
> Dying children in our arms
> Mothers weep the night away
> Dead settlement. Dead village.
> Faces of stone. Hearts of stone.
>
> My enemy, my brother, my neighbour.
> Listen. ….
> These stony faces, these stony hearts, these burning homes,
> These pictures of destruction,

[553] Unnithan, 2001

All my hometowns, all your hometowns
speak.

Each in our own fields
Instead of wheat, instead of rice
Why do we sow weapons
When in both our streets
Hungry children weep

My friend, my brother, my neighbour
Come. Let us vow
War will not happen
and look forward to the blooming of
your homeland and my homeland

Bajrangi Bhaijan

I end with a discussion on one film that discovers that Difference only hides the Sameness of the Other, and ends with an Embrace.

Certain films stand out in every theme and trope as representing that particular idea. To illustrate the trope of a common South Asian-ness, of love across the border, I chose the blockbuster *Bajrangi Bhaijan* (2015), by Kabir Khan. *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015) deals with bitter politics in a human, everyday way, its sophistication lies in its simplicity, and the message that human relationships are transformative. Startling with bold music in inhumanly magnificent disputed Kashmir – Pakistani-Kashmir - the opening scene is a village gathering watching India-Pakistan cricket on TV in tense excitement; an old man is praying for victory, a very pregnant woman confiding to her friend that she will name her son after Shahid Afridi; the friend laughs and asks, "What if it's a girl?". They celebrate a Pakistani victory and schoolgirls kiss the Pakistani flag pictured on the TV.

6 years later, mute little Shahida is brought from Pakistan to be healed at the shrine of Khwaja Nizamuddin in Delhi. Initially, when advised to do so, her father says it is harder for a Pakistani to get a visa for India than for America. So the mother travels alone with the child. Crossing from Pakistan to India, to Amir Khusro's song "*Aaj Rung hai,*"[554], a Sufi composition celebrating the many colours of the world,[555] at the Wagah border, a

[554] "The world is full of colour today"
[555] Amir Khusro of Delhi (1253-1325) is *THE* iconic syncretic Indian renaissance-man, musician, poet, sufi, scholar, soldier.

fierce looking Sikh guard, one of India's many colours, exchanges smiles with the little Pakistani girl. On the return train journey, the child gets separated from her mother and left behind in India, while the train carries her mother back to Pakistan. Her screaming mother pleads with the helpful guards, but although she is 5 minutes and 500 hundred yards away, she might as well be in another continent. The (unbelievably) loving way in which this mother is consoled by her distraught menfolk, breaks with the stereotypical harsh Pakistani Muslim male.

The child lands up - hundreds of kilometres away - in Kurukshetra, the land of the Mahabharat, in the middle of a saffron-colourful, militantly Hindu festival. Opportunity for a rollicking song and dance, "Victory to Hanuman[556], lets break the bones of the enemy", as the two "enemies", the hero, - rough-tough, goodhearted, rather simple, Brahmin devotee of Hanuman - and the 6-year-old lost mute but smart little girl, have their first encounter. This scene showcases the cheerfulness of the completely male crowd juxtaposed with the violence of the words they are unthinkingly singing, and the simple kindness and charity which spring from the same source, and make the hero give this lost hungry child a meal. Pavan, aka *Bajrangi* [557] *Bhaijaan*.[558] takes her to the police station, where they tell him that a police station full of 'lowlifes' is no place for a pretty young child. By now Pavan is calling the child Munni (Little One) and instructing her to call him "Mama"; he takes her to Delhi. "Mama" means Uncle – mother's brother. In many parts of the subcontinent, it is the most sacrosanct of familial relationships, in others, it is second only to the father, in all, it is a relationship of particular affection, responsibility, and protection - shades of the matriarchal system, and here you have an establishing of kin, an embrace of this "Other", but Pavan does not yet know how much of an Other she is.

In Delhi, his prospective father-in-law-to-be, an uncompromising Brahmin, is displeased, Pavan has to convince him that Munni must be Brahmin, her (Kashmiri) skin is so pale. This assumption suffers a rude shock when after a few vegetarian days, she is discovered devouring chicken at the Muslim neighbour's house. Pavan is furious with this child whom he has started doting on, she is equally furious when he drags her away. In real

[556] The physically powerful "monkey-god"
[557] Refers to the powerful body of Hanuman
[558] Affectionate respectful form for "brother"

life, no Muslim would dare to give an unknown Hindu child meat, it could lead to mayhem and death. Pavan, his feisty fiancée, Rasika, and her little brother, Deepu, who has become Munni's best friend, take Munni to a restaurant and order chicken for her, seating her separately so that her meat-eating will not pollute them. Pavan is trying to convince himself that Munni must be a carnivorous Kshatriya, a high (enough) caste. Remembering her mother, Munni becomes tearful, to distract her they sing, "Bring on the chicken, to hell with my faith". A delighted Munni offers Pavan some chicken which he rejects with a *Tobah tobah (*"God Forbid") gesture.

Pavan bows whenever he sees a monkey (symbols of Hanuman). Very naturally, Munni starts copying him. He tries to teach her to say "Jai Shri Raam",[559] a Hindu greeting, now also a Hindutva war-cry. After the chicken-eating, he takes her to a temple, to ask forgiveness for himself entering a non-vegetarian restaurant, Munni dutifully copies him. Mirroring the temple, is a Muslim shrine opposite, showing sameness after the difference in cuisine. While Pavan is praying, Munni runs off to the familiar Muslim shrine. Opening his eyes, Pavan is terrified that she may have wandered into the Muslim shrine in total innocence. Frantically asking forgiveness from Hanuman for entering the rival place of worship, Pavan is aghast to see Munni saying the *namaz* with familiarity. Stumbling out, he stammers to Rasika that Munni has turned out to be "one of them", a "Mohammadan".[560] Rasika gives him a dressing-down for thinking in these terms, showing her disagreement with her father's opinions. As Pavan is absorbing this, Munni appears, and throws herself into his arms. Unwillingly, he is completely won over by her innocent adoration.

Terrified of what his father-in-law will do when he finds out that Munni is not just not-a-Brahmin, but beyond the pale, Pavan listens as Rasika reminds him of a lesson from the Mahabharat, roughly translatable as discretion being the better part of valour. During their whispered conversation in a corner of the family courtyard, the rest of the family and neighbourhood are gathered around a tense phase in a televised cricket match between India and Pakistan. An urban and Indian mirror image of our first match in Kashmir. When the Indians clap, Munni remains glum. When the Pakistanis are winning,

[559] She does the appropriate gestures
[560] A "western" word, sometimes also used by Hindus; Muslims generally prefer to describe themselves as followers of a faith rather than of a man

Munni starts clapping. Her little pal, Deepu, tells her she understands nothing about cricket, she's clapping for the wrong team. When Munni's namesake, Pakistani Shahid Afridi, scores some amazing feat, everyone groans, but Munni does a victory dance, runs up to the television and kisses the Pakistani flag on the screen.

After this there is no question of discretion. An enraged father-in-law tells Pavan to send this enemy child home forthwith. In a little by-play, Deepu and Munni, surreptitiously wave to each other, realizing that they are caught in a conflict, but not understanding any of it. Pavan takes Munni to the Pakistan embassy, only to be caught in an anti-Pakistan riot by Hindu extremists, which closes down the embassy for a month. No Pakistani is shown in this incident, the official dealing brusquely with Pavan (since Munni has no documents) identifies himself as a (non-Muslim) Indian, simply an employee of the Pakistani embassy. (Again the encounter stresses sameness, through the Indian Pakistani-embassy officer). They return, crestfallen, Deepu is delighted, but Father-in-law sends Pavan to a dodgy travel agent, who promises to deliver Munni to her parents. Pavan detaches himself from a tearful Munni, but regretting this hardheartedness, he buys her a little gift, and returns to see the travel agent taking Munni into a building, eventually realizing that it is a brothel.

In a thrilling action scene, an enraged Pavan neutralizes all the human traffickers and rescues Munni. Transformed from a simple gullible man into one whose eyes have been irrevocably opened, now Pavan decides that it is his lot and duty to reunite Munni with her parents. Rasika agrees. Without documents, he sets out on an epic journey. At the border, Pavan refuses to sneak into Pakistan, requesting permission from the Pakistani border patrol, who first beat him, but a "good" Pakistani officer, convinced by his sincerity, allows them to proceed. In Pakistan, a fiasco misidentifies Pavan and Munni both as Indians, and they are arrested. A small-time local reporter, Chand-Nawab, arrives at the police station to report on this Indian spy and his "assistant". Inside the police station, Munni sees a calendar picture which she excitedly identifies as "home". When a policeman manhandles her, an enraged Pavan, neutralizes the policemen and escapes with Munni and the picture. Chand-Nawab follows them onto a bus named *Chhamo Deewani,* [561] (as Pakistani trucks tend to be! – the opportunity to highlight Pakistan's colourful and fascinating truck-bus art/culture is nicely used). When the ticket collector asks for

[561] Metaphorically roughly translatable as Wild Molly

Pakistani money, which Pavan does not have, Pawan regales the whole bus with his story. And when the police search the bus, they do not find them – they are hidden on the roof, with the connivance of the whole busload of passengers. So a couple of vicious Pakistani policemen are balanced by a bus-full of good Pakistanis. Pavan and Munni, now accompanied by a converted Chand-Nawab, are dropped off at an empty mosque, a safe place to spend the night. Pavan is loath to set foot in a mosque, but fear of the police makes him do so. The next morning the *maulvi* enters with hordes of young pupils, of course Pavan again spills the whole story, and shows him the picture of Munni's "home". The *mullah'*s students come from all over Pakistan, and he asks whether any of them recognizes the area. They don't. Suddenly, one child pipes up that the picture is of Switzerland. Everyone makes fun of him till he shows them that's what's actually written on the picture. The *mullah* says that Kashmir is often compared to Switzerland, Kashmir. Pavan is further confused , "But Kashmir is in India, now do we have to go BACK to India?" The *mullah* laughs, "Well, we also have a small piece", as Munni nods her head vigorously. The *mullah* and the *madrassah* children, all shown in an extremely positive light, help the three of them on their way.

Pavan suggests they go to a nearby Muslim shrine, which specializes in uniting separated people. Chand Nawab laughs at his transformation but they go. Some mild violence is shown by Pakistani police to try and trace the three. Pavan uses himself as a decoy, entrusting Munni to Chand Nawab, a symbolic move. Caught by Pakistani police, Pavan is severely beaten. Such custodial violence, routine on both sides of the border, is well known and accepted, but in the film is perpetrated by the Pakistanis. This is balanced by the human traffickers and the embassy-rioters being Indian, by the Brahmin father-in-law's intolerance and by the many Pakistanis who helped these two, the biggest of them being Chand Nawab, converted by Pavan's simple sincerity. There's not much to choose between human traffickers plus religious fanatics against police brutality.

It is Chand Nawab who delivers Munni to her parents. Not Pavan, the Indian Savior, but the Pakistani. Pavan now has become a pawn of devious Pakistani politicians scoring anti-India points. But the good Pakistani cops torturing him, are unwilling to tarnish Pakistan's integrity by a miscarriage of justice. Orchestrated by Chand Nawab, a social media campaign later, the good cop decides to deliver Pavan to the border. Arriving there, a growing crowd of thousands gathers around them, coming to see off this Indian, who brought the little Pakistani girl home. The police escort are confronted by a young

Pakistani army officer, who informs them that his instructions are to arrest Pavan. In the most blatantly symbolic sentence in the whole film, the officer, wasting not a word, says simply, "But we are a few soldiers. The people are in thousands." He smiles and steps back, and allows the will of the Pakistani people to prevail. This heretical passage was censored in Pakistani cinema-hall showings.

Chand Nawab is here to inform Pavan that the task entrusted to him has been fulfilled. Munni, now Shahida, is also present somewhere in the huge crowd, with her parents. As Pavan prepares to go home, in a symbolic gesture, he raises a single hand in "salaam", the Muslim greeting, in contrast to his usual "Jai Shri Ram", surprising even himself. On the Indian side too, huge crowds are gathered including his family. As he crosses the river-border, a voice echoes across the valley, "Mama…" – and then "Jai Shri Ram…!". Munni has found her voice. And the sound of it makes Pavan retrace his steps through the river, to meet and embrace her midstream.

The movie ends there.

Ayesha Siddiqua, a Pakistani expert on strategic affairs, says it is "a film that makes hawks on both sides squirm." [562] Responding to an Indian columnist who is angered that the film tries to show Indians and Pakistanis as the same, "…. over a period of 68 years, we have become different, with a varied political history and ethos. Moreover, our leaderships have invested a lot in generating insecurity and building up iron curtains. ….[563] Siddiqua goes on to say that while the film shows similarities it also shows differences.

> "*Bajrangi Bhaijaan* is not just an India-Pakistan story, it is also about independent yet linked social realities of the two states. …. In the last scene, where common people from Pakistani Kashmir force the border gate open to allow the hero to return (home), the people firmly stick to their sides and do not cross over."

[562] Siddiqua, 2015
[563] ibid

Another nod in the right direction, Rasika is the clear thinking one, it is she and Munni between them who transform Pavan out of the narrow prejudices epitomised by Rasika's father.

> "The film doesn't say that we are the same; it just reminds us of our geographical closeness, which, in so many years, has proved to be both a boon and a bane. Pakistan's best friend is China, but people watch Bollywood movies, not Chinese films. ….. (this film) humanises the right-wing in both India and Pakistan ….. (and) is a dialogue with Hindu nationalism, ….. also reminds the Hindu right-wing that there are other ways it could deal with minorities in India, as well as Pakistan ….."

Making the very point of how India and Pakistan mirror each other, Siddiqua goes on to say,

> "I wonder why the aforementioned Indian writer feels we are not similar when there are people like him in Pakistan who were angered by the film and even tried to get it banned….. The film is extraordinary as it engages Pakistan in a conversation without denigrating any of its critical institutions. Similar to the way it humanises Hindutva, it also gives a human face to Pakistan's security establishment. Once convinced of the authenticity of Bajrangi Bhai's mission, the border patrol officer allows him to sneak into Pakistan. Despite being eventually caught and tortured, …. (officers) let him leave. The film challenges Pakistan's officialdom not to view a human crisis from the lens of power and organisational ego. It draws attention towards the need to respect each other's religious and cultural norms. While doing so, it does not humiliate ordinary Pakistanis, which is one of the reasons the film was popularly received in Pakistan and is a lesson in good diplomacy. ….. The film defeats stereotypes which is perhaps why the hawks and naysayers on both sides are uncomfortable ….." [564]

Whereas Munni is a little girl, younger, smaller, female, Muslim, Pakistani, and Pavan is large, male, older, Hindu, Indian; and what is obvious is that it is he who is doing

[564] Siddiqua, 2015

everything for her, and yet what the film ultimately shows is how the power of the love of this child transforms him.

Conclusion

This is the last of the empirical chapters, and the second empirical chapter discussing the reconciliatory tropes, moving from a more tacit recognition of Sameness in the last chapter to more active reconciliation. It completes the journey from the Self to the Other to the Embrace.

India, as the Self, has the pro-active role in these films. This is natural, they are Indian films, "Made in India", with Indian protagonists. This "Peace" trope is expressed in myriad ways, and in almost every case, the films raise moral questions, even in the guise of comedy. These questions address the audience, and "the establishment", often both establishments, as in *Henna* (1991), *Refugee* (1999), *No one killed Jessica* (2011), *Ek tha Tiger* (2012), *Main hoon na* (2004). There are films, like *Hindustan ki kasam* (1999) or Tiger-3, which accord the Indian government only laudable motives, and assign the rogues to Pakistan. Much of this peace trope is expressed through person to person relationships, such as *Ao Ab Laut Chalen* (1999), *Refugee* (2000), *Gadar* (2001), *Dil bole Hadippa* (2009), *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag* (2012), *Ek tha Tiger* (2012), *Bharat* (2019), *Lal Singh Chadda* (2022), and *Indoo ki jawani* (2020). *Kya Dilli kya Lahore* (2014), and *Raazi* (2018) ask questions not just of the establishment but of the audience and the public at large, and gives no answers.

Although the reconciliatory stories use myriad imaginative and creative tropes, these are commonalities of culture, values, ethics, and even identity. And as discussed in the last chapter, there is also difference and an acceptance and embrace of this difference. Films portraying positive Pakistanis, or showing Indians as fallible, offer an inclusive perspective which offers a positive framework that can look to the future instead of constant harking back to past hostilities and projecting them into the future. Both *Kya Dilli kya Lahore* (2014) and *Raazi* (2018) show how destructive hostility is; but most inclusive films present a more heartwarming picture of mutual respect and affection, despite the prevailing atmosphere, not from the point of view of victory or defeat. The Other exists. The choice is between a sustainable peace or the heady rush of victory after

one bloody battle, after which we return to hostilities. Even films of violence can avoid the villainization of Pakistan, if they wish.

Finally, I elaborated the film *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015) to conclude, as a film that foregrounds difference to establish commonalities, as *Dharmputra* did over half a century before. But where in *Dharmputra,* love is taken for granted, and straight-talking logic and rationality is used for argument, in *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015)**,** emotion is the only argument. *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015) seeks to show how at every step, it is human relationships that transform people, and it is people who transform politics. The film inherently conveys that an embrace is not possible without this transformation, such transformation is compulsory for peace and reconciliation. The transformation is necessary on both sides of this divide, and includes ceding primacy, as Bajrangi does when he allows Chand Nawab to fulfil Bajrangi's promise to take Munni home. This in turn brings the goodwill of thousands of Pakistanis. *Bajrangi Bhaijan* (2015) is about transformation of both sides, through each other's goodwill and sincerity, and this is what is required to bring peace and reconciliation.

In the light of the theoretical foundation and the evidence of the empirical chapters, having completed the journey from Self to Embrace, accompanied by the Other, I use the next chapter to finalize the conclusions of this thesis.

Conclusion

This concluding chapter draws together the significance and the background for this thesis, and highlights some of the important findings and conclusions of the study, based on an analysis of the five main empirical chapters, Chapters 3, 4, 5 6 and 7.

Hindi language cinema plays a central role in modern Indian popular culture. It represents the mostly widely consumed medium of culture, crossing class boundaries, consumed in traditional cinemas, streaming services, Youtube, legal and illegal DVDs. It both represents and influences Indian society, and yet remains under-explored for its potential to provide a lens on Indian society. This thesis does not seek to argue that there is a causal direction in either direction or argue what these influences may be. As a first step in a larger research agenda, this thesis catalogues the entire canon of Hindi language films which deal with Pakistan, and analyses the major themes which emerge from reviewing the canon at large.

Hindi cinema is perceived as hostile to Pakistan. This is such a dominant perception that friendly, reconciliatory movies, blockbusters in their time, are not in people's immediate consciousness. Because films are not seen in isolation, they are part of a general environment of hostility, in which they have also made a place. However, big blockbusters with a reconciliatory theme are recognized, if at second glance, as important, but are considered as "exceptions".

Film is one of the dominant ways in which Indians "see" Pakistan. Due to the difficulties of travel, including difficulties securing visas, very few Indians have ever been to Pakistan. Even the small minority who do travel, do so with restrictions, monitored, or at elite gatherings, with limited opportunity for wider informal communication. The occasional short term more generous visa regimes for cricket matches, or the occasional Sikh or Hindu pilgrimages are extremely few and far between, even these have restrictions. These interactions often elicit surprise at the friendliness shown, as discussed in detail below. As Siddiqua says, "…. despite having been one, in the last few years we

have forgotten each other. Not that we have changed, but we no longer know much about each other, and have lots of misconceptions." [565]

Governments also assume that film has a popular impact. The films *PM Narendra Modi* (2019) was stopped for release by the Election Commission in 2019,[566] and concerns were also raised about *Emergency* (2024) in the 2024 Election; [567] it was assumed they would affect the election. The (detrimental) effect of Hindi cinema on Pakistani culture is also constantly discussed in Pakistan. There is no rigorous evidence of the impact of film on popular opinion, but its role is well argued. Any reference to Pakistan also sees the film receiving closer scrutiny in the censor's office in both India and Pakistan. This reflects political reality. Both India and Pakistan are still struggling with identity issues almost 80 years after Independence. In both cases, this is strongly related to the existence and the ideology of the other. Their dispute over Kashmir adds to this volatile reality. To paraphrase Hutheesing, India has the task of "welding [now almost one and a half billion] people, speaking nearly a hundred languages and dialects into a modern nation," [568] and Pakistan too, has to do something similar, having abandoned a third of what it considered its constituency,[569] lost more than half its population[570] and a huge part of its territory[571], while still in dispute over initial territorial claims with its massive neighbour. These unresolved issues both influence the stories the films tell, and how they are 'seen'. Yet despite widespread academic and popular debates on individual films, until now, there has been little systematic analysis of how Pakistan is portrayed, taking the canon of Hindi language film as a whole.

Hindi cinema, plays a role in both reflecting and shaping the creation of the Indian national identity in myriad ways. Its treatment of Pakistan is worth particular study, given the entwined histories of the two states, and the central role of each for the other. 'Othering' is a common framework for analysing political perspective in such hostile environments. Normally, Othering is understood as "manufactured prejudice", a "product that stokes feelings of distrust and loathing." This "power to depict certain "others" as

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[565] Siddiqua, 2015
[566] Vaidyanathan, 2019
[567] Bollywood Hungama, 20.09.2023
[568] Hutheesing, 1963, 4
[569] Indian Muslims who remained in India
[570] When Bangladesh became independent
[571] ibid

innately strange and dangerous—as foul creatures not like the rest of us—is surely as devastating as the physical force of weaponry."[572] Often, this is done without the audience even realizing it.[573] Such portrayals "wreak their damaging psychological havoc on us all, inflaming bigotry and xenophobia,"[574] debunking such fixed images is a difficult task.[575]

However, Lebow argues that identity is constructed, not just by differentiating from 'others', and not even just by engaging with Others, but also actually by moving towards Others, instead of building barriers. [576]

This thesis constructs its analysis of Hindi film through these frameworks. It has explored how this 'Othering' is constructed. It unpicks how even a framing of common culture is complex – it can be a challenge to Othering, but it can also, negatively, be a denial of Pakistani agency, of their assertion for self-determination. These frames allow us to explore how the Other is part of India's own introspection, but is also a way of projecting hostility, on occasions of showing reconciliation – and even includes 'moving towards', perhaps, that final Embrace.

That Hindi language Indian film engages in 'Othering' Pakistan and Pakistanis is hardly a surprising conclusion. However the analysis in this study shows that Othering is not a simple matter, and is not constructed only through religion and national identity. Both religion and national identity are too complex and too intertwined to allow an easy othering, India still owns a huge Muslim population, and the creation of Pakistan was a move resisted by almost the whole of the non-Muslim population, and even by large sections of the Muslim population. Those who supported the creation of Pakistan were recent supporters of the idea, it was in 1946 that this idea gained popular support, and much research still required to be done to examine this is a time when there was no adult franchise. Who became Pakistanis was a matter of both choice and chance, and not an intrinsic identity.

The chapters above, and the rest of this conclusion highlight the myriad ways in which Hindi films engage with Pakistan, drawing out complex commonalities, using Pakistan

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[572] Greider, 2009
[573] ibid
[574] Shaheen, 2009, 3
[575] ibid, 6
[576] Lebow 2012, 270-271, Resende, 2020, 11

to understand the Self – and even occasionally but significantly, moving beyond an exploration of Pakistan as Other, or a denial of Pakistan's self-identity, towards an acceptance of the current reality, sometimes culminating in an Embrace. Resende takes Lebow's discussion a step further, saying that;

> "in current times where life itself seems so fragile and tenuous, and where we continuously see the Other being reduced to less than human, it stands as an ethical imperative to all of us" to [find and come] "to terms with a composition of the Self that also includes the Other and enables us to take responsibility for him/her inasmuch it prevents the conditions for violence and conflict."[577]

Surely, after 80 years as independent countries, it should not be necessary to foment violent antagonism towards others in order to maintain identity.

While cinema is not the battleground or the diplomatic table at which solutions will be created, it reflects and affects public opinion, which few governments are willing to go against, in these democratic times. "Hostile films" are in the majority, but they are, by no means, the only frame of reference. Analysing the range of perspectives on Pakistan which are available to Hindi cinema audiences gives us some potential to understand an important part of the environment in which the public's insights are formed. Siddiqua asserts, Hindi cinema is renowned for "its flights of fantasy, and that's how it functions…. Film, …. is fiction, which by its very nature forces us to imagine possibilities that may not be there in real life."[578] Of course, there are forces within the film industry and the larger environment that wish to Other, that serve many vested interests; simultaneously there also exist forces and committed people who make efforts for Peace.

In this Conclusion I first look at the most major area, which is the complexity of the portrayals. Further to this I look at four other areas, drawn from the evidence of the empirical chapters, and based on the theory and methodology. In addition to the detailed findings in each chapter, these reflect major trends in the portrayals, as explored in the empirical chapters.

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[577] Resende, 2020, 2-3
[578] Siddiqua, 2015

1. The complexity of the Portrayals, which leads to the development of the finer tropes.
2. The "Othering" of Indian Muslims and even Kashmiri (and other) militants from Pakistan.
3. The time-warp and geographic warp of the portrayals found in all categories
4. Portrayal of the "common Pakistani" versus the Pakistani rulers, to show willingness to reconcile with this ordinary Pakistani
5. Embracing the Other

The Complexity of the Portrayals

Pakistani audiences, in the author's personal experience, take even a hostile portrayal of Pakistan and Pakistanis in their stride, they have little expectation of anything different from Indian films. The attitude is; these are Indian films, and "naturally" they will present Pakistan in a poor light. Pakistanis have their own context, their known reality of Pakistan, a "Bollywood" version of a Pakistani is the last thing that affects their view of this, they know what Pakistanis are like, they are Pakistanis themselves. A Hindi cinema portrayal of Pakistan is not taken seriously. Some Pakistanis may consider some portrayals reasonably realistic, amongst these of course, are those people who are nevertheless irritated by Indian criticism of this reality, specially in films where India is hagiographed. Pakistanis are introduced to Indians of every kind, ordinary, good, bad, villainous, indifferent, crazy, rich, poor, lawyers, police, criminal, prostitutes, religious, frauds, civil servants, dancers, singers, teachers, Hindus, military personnel, sportspeople, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Parsee, Sikh, children, zealots, the boy-next-door, EVERTHING, including the Indian Prime Minster. You name it, there is a "Bollywood" version of that character, from the RAW agent to the street scavenger. Films where Indian culpability is also affirmed, in addition to Pakistani culpability, are more likely to find resonance.

What Indian films say matters much more in India. Indians and Pakistanis have no "real" exposure to each other. Visas and travel between the two countries are almost non-existent, even for people with families on the other side. Occasionally important film personalities get visas and given an elite birds-eye view/blinkered view/tour of the high society of Pakistan. Tickets to their events cost thousands of rupees, personal contact is

limited to the very rich and famous, who naturally want to present their country in the best possible light. Indian surprise at the Pakistani welcome is well documented. Ordinary Indians who came in thousands in better

days of cricket visas, as well as famous film and political personalities, conference visitors[579] and my personal experience all speak of innumerable stories of the warmth and hospitality, this is also highlighted in *Lashtam Pashtam (*2018). This very surprise speaks of the reductive portrayal of Pakistan that is pervasive.

Many films which present a villainous portrayal of Pakistan, have little complexity in the story, or the characters, as discussed in Chapter 4. But it is the portrayal of these character as an Other, that is complicated. The reality of these two countries inability to untangle themselves from each other, with their identities contingent on each other, the too-much-unfinished-business, even apart from Kashmir, has meant that even the most hostile Othering has intentional and unintentional layers.

India and Pakistan have a particular (although perhaps not unique) Othering relationship, the "Other was once part of Oneself", the two-nation theory notwithstanding. The single Othering factor is that of religion; ethnicities and language are common, this is the particularity. This leads into one of the most tangled complexities, for if religion is the dividing factor, why are Muslims themselves divided between India and Pakistan? Is there a spectrum on which all Muslims are othered, the extreme Other being the Pakistani Muslim? This is seen in how Othering (not always hostile) is clearly framed around the characters' Muslim identity in films such as *Sarfarosh*, and *Roja.* But then what differentiates the Pakistani Muslim from the Indian Muslim other than the single fact of nationality? What are the specifics of this nationality? The Loyal Indian Muslim trope portrays Muslims committed to India, despite their religion being made obvious. Muslim soldiers in the Indian army are portrayed in many films, *Hindustan ki kasam, Uri, Shershaah, Fighter,* etc., but not in *Border.* This is not just a problem for India's definition of the Other, it is a problem for India's definition of itself, and equally for

[579] Express Tribune, "Two separated brothers': Sehwag all praise for Pakistani hospitality", 05.06.2023
Dunya News, "Swara Bhaskar interview", 27.10.2015
Scroll.in, "Vajpayee saying Pakistanis are kind and hospitable", 23.08.2016
Alagh, 2008, 192-194

Pakistan's definition of itself. This thesis only examines the Othering of Pakistanis, but there are tangled threads here.

Othering was superimposed on Sameness. Two-nation believers would argue that this happened long ago, when thousands converted to Islam, that was the first Othering, others would argue that it happened when the British divided us into categories and ruled us by creating this Othering; whichever view we choose, there was Sameness at one time; Othering was imposed on to it, whether long ago when Islam came to the subcontinent, or when the British came to the subcontinent, or when Pakistan divided the subcontinent. This legal separation either affirmed or created an othering. Naturally, the two-nation point of view hardly finds expression in Indian film, except to be dismissed, some argue (*Gadar, Bharat Bhagya Vidhata)* that Pakistan completed what the British started.

The creation of Pakistan happened overnight, its political creation too, mostly, in just over a year. The Indo-Pak border didn't exist one day, and then next day it did. At midnight we were different in a way that we had never been before. A factual and legal way. And for all that we may have been the same, this difference was now relevant to all our lives in ways that we could never have imagined.

I decided the most meaningful way to examine this Othering-out-of-Sameness was to first explore it as part of the story of the Self, then as the Other in the story, and then where there is an acceptance and Embrace of this Other, which are congruent with the three themes of Introspection, Hostility and Reconciliation.

There is a linear logic in this progression. Starting with the early films, which are not at all hostile, but use this new Other to provide a basis for introspection of India's polity and national identity, to the films that use this Other as the antagonist, and moving further on with those films which make the choice to accept the existence and offer the Other an Embrace, leading to an end to conflict: this has been my basis of categorisation of the films. To explore this further, I have juxtaposed this Othering with Sameness, the hostile films either display this sameness unintentionally, or to challenge the existence of the Other through weaponizing Sameness to obliterate the identity of the Other; this may at first glance look like an Owning but is in fact a suffocation. Whereas reconciliatory films while recognizing Sameness accept the current reality of the Other and offer - instead of Owning - an Embrace. Much of this grows out of the particularity of this Self-and-Other, this Other, in the case of Pakistan, desires to be Othered and also rejects Sameness.

Both the Introspective and the Reconciliatory themes accept this Other, but in two different ways; the Introspective films accept the Other as a reality, and move on to dealing with complexities of Indian society. The Reconciliatory films accept this Other as a reality, and move on to establishing Peace with the Other. In between are caught the Hostile themes which careen between Othering and then challenging this Othering, they tend to depend much more on stereotypes, the stories are mostly based around war and terrorism, and tend to have repetitive elements. The Introspective and Reconciliatory stories are varied and more creative.

To capture the complexity of the portrayals, I identified and categorized different tropes which established patterns in the films, a more detailed teasing out of the three broader themes. In this process, then, a new category emerged, of tropes that could not be neatly identified as either Hostile or Reconciliatory or even Introspective, they depended on both the context, and the audiences reading of them, which in turn depended on the audiences' own world views. These tropes were an extremely important component of the Hindi cinema portrayal of Pakistan. So for these I created the category, of Ambiguous tropes, and so I have the four categories of Introspective, Hostile, Ambiguous and Reconciliatory tropes.

The Introspective trope is where Pakistan may not be a visible presence in the film, but the film is made because of some effect that it has had on India, it has become part of India's own story. The hostile tropes are caught in the complexity of denying Othering, in order to establish that there was no need for Pakistan, and then presenting a Pakistani entirely villainous in order to Other him (it is nearly always a "him"), and yet there are Samenesses that cannot be denied. Many of these are war and terrorism films. The Ambiguous tropes are more dependent on the ideology of the viewer, and tend to promote secularism and the loyalty of Indian Muslims; sometimes creating an Othering in their clumsy efforts to promote Sameness. They also create an Othering of Indians, specially Indian Muslims, from Pakistan, but also of ordinary Pakistanis from the Pakistan state. I have also included films here which may villainize Pakistan but are also critical enough of the Indian state to strike some sort of balance. Finally, I have ended with the hopeful tropes, which foreground Sameness, which also make an effort to portray Pakistan positively, and which show a desire for Peace and friendship.

And within each collection of tropes, or Themes, I have further detailed the finer tropes, which are a product and a conclusion of this research.

1 The Introspective trope which is present in films where the focus is on the Indian body politic and not on India-Pakistan relations
2 Hostile tropes, where the Other is seen as a Villain, as a factual enemy, or which showcase paternalism and hierarchy, showing India as superior and Pakistan as inferior in different ways, including morally. This often morphs into an owning of the Other in a way that denies the other their otherness, it may superficially be an embrace but the denial makes it into a suffocation of the agency of this Other, who is asserting their Otherness.
3 Ambiguous tropes were a key finding of this research. They are expressed in myriad ways but whether they are considered positive or negative expressions is built into the subjectivity of the viewer rather then inherent in themselves. These are tropes where the common Pakistani is shown at odds , in opposition to the Pakistani state, or the Pakistani state as shown as indifferent to the wellbeing of its citizens. There is also the Loyal Indian Muslim trope, where the focus is to show that Pakistan's claim to be a haven for the Muslims of India is a very contested one, and that religion is not a good enough reason for Pakistan to have othered itself, this is one manifestation of the suffocating embrace. The loyal Indian Muslim trope also showcases Indian secularism with the same purpose, vis a vis India-Pakistan. Both these tropes may also have other motives, such as expressions and encouragement of communal harmony, but for this research, I have confined my analysis to the India-Pakistan focus.

   Hindu-Muslim love and romance too is an ambiguous trope. Given that the gender balance is largely with the men being non-Pakistani, this has complicated ramifications with element of patriarchy, conquest being vested in the man, and honour in the woman. To delve deeper into each case was not possible within the scope of this research, this definitely requires more in-depth research, as despite the large majority, not all cases conform to the above gender roles.

   Portraying the aristocratic and civilized culture and language of Pakistan often reflects an exoticization which superficially is favourable, but in fact is at odds

with reality, and shows a "foreign-ness", where it does not exist. The reverse side of this is to mispronounce common Pakistani and Muslim words including names, to highlight their foreign-ness.

Showing Indian culpability where there is a overt and nascent critique of Pakistan or the Pakistani Other is generally presented to be seen to balance the scales. The critique may not be equivalent, or equal, or even with the same focus, but it implies a willingness and a faculty to view both India and Pakistan from a neutral or an unbiased, unprejudiced, open-minded and non-partisan point of view. I include this amongst the ambiguous tropes, because unless supported by other more positive tropes, the critique of Pakistan is often considerably harsher.

4 Reconciliatory tropes

From the empirical evidence of the films, I have further made a divide in the reconciliatory tropes, as those which showcase a positive portrayal and those which portrayal an active possibility of peace.

To elucidate, these are those tropes that portray sameness, which show positive representations of Pakistani women, which refuse a default demonization of Pakistan, some of which actively show Pakistan and India on the same side against Another Other, sometimes somewhat gratuitously created, sometimes more organic .

And finally, the last reconciliatory trope, to which I have devoted a complete chapter is that which actively advocates peace.

The above analysis and findings of the research show that there are both inbuilt/intrinsic and conscious challenges to the prevalent dominant hostility towards, and Othering of, Pakistan in Indian Hindi cinema.

In the following discussion, I elaborate some of these complexities in detail, particularly in areas in which a narrower focus on fewer films, many of which have been identified in this study, may yield more insights.

The "Othering" of Indian Muslims and even Kashmiri (and other) militants from Pakistan.

It is standard procedure to "Own" the Indian Muslim, even when it is sometimes left up to them to make all the effort, as in *Sarfarosh* (1999) and *Road to Sangam* (2010). In military films, almost every case, this Loyal Indian Muslim pays the price for this loyalty, he is killed by Pakistan, in *Aakraman*, in *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata*, in *Border Hindustan ka*, discussed in detail in the Chapter on Ambiguous tropes. This shows this Loyal Indian Muslim that Pakistan is othering them, while their loyalty is also showcased to the Indian public, who may need to be convinced of this. The fact that this loyalty needs to be established immediately Others them, but most of the films are oblivious to this.

Moving on from this, what about the not-so-loyal always-Muslim militant?[580] Once you accept there is militancy, what is to be done with this militant? The simplest and easiest and most common approach is to villainize all militancy, no thinking or care is required and its risk free. It may be possible to present an honourable military enemy (such as the character of Squadron Leader Osman in *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973), or Major Qureshi in *Deewar* (2004), but can one ever present an honourable terrorist? Some films have made sincere efforts to present and even "own" the Kashmiri (and other[581]) militants[582], and even given them some voice, although even the best of them are presented as misguided, and most are presented as rural, uneducated and brainwashed, having no agency, manipulated by these clever Pakistanis, the Machiavellian manipulator mastermind. Some of these films show the Indian state as culpable, either by mistake[583] or by venal intent[584], and try and present a more balanced view if not an impartial one. But they are never portrayed as "freedom-fighters", and virtually none discuss their claims in a convincing way.

Some, seeking to be balanced, present the situation in Indian Kashmir as similar to that of Pakistani Kashmir, although the political situation on the ground is entirely different. *Fanaa* (2006), *Lamhaa* (2010), *Haider* (2014), *Sam Bahadur* (2023) try to show some

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[580] Nearly-always, occasionally there are Sikh militants, others shown *Sarfarosh* (1999), *Tango Charlie* (2005), *Dil Se* (1998)
[581] *Dil Se* (1998) (the North East)
[582] *Roja*, (1992) *Mission Kashmir* (2000) *Fanaa* (2006), *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata* (2002)
[583] *Mission Kashmir* (2000)
[584] *Haider* (2014), *Dil Se (*1998), *Lamhaa* (2010)

political discussion about the origins of the Kashmir conflict, *Fanaa* (2006) is the single film in which a terrorist is allowed the epitaph, "He did what he believed was right," by the person who killed him. But Pakistan is always the aggressor and its motives are the worst. But there is no discussion of historical rights and wrongs, except briefly in *Fanaa* (2006).

The Time-warp and the geographic-warp of the portrayals

Because of the lack of direct contact with Pakistanis, the image that Hindi cinema holds of Pakistanis dates in many ways from nearly 80 years ago, which even then may have been a stereotypical portrayal. Pakistanis are presented in the image of the Urdu-speaking Muslims of the UP, who are India's dominant perception of what "Muslims" are like, often aristocratic, opulent, although the reality is that in India, there are Muslims from every ethnicity and state, and Muslim speakers of every Indian language, and in Pakistan the Urdu-speaking refugees from the UP, known as Muhajirs, were barely more than 7 percent of Pakistan's population.[585] In the 77 years since partition Urdu has become a lingua franca in Pakistan but it is not the Urdu of the UP.[586] This is epitomized in the single word, greeting, *Adaab.*[587] Such depictions of Pakistanis rouse both mirth and irritation amongst Pakistanis, and are well expressed in the title of a Pakistani review of the 2023 film, *Mission Majnu,* "How many *adaabs* are too many *adaabs*?" [588] The number of Pakistanis who use this greeting can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand. Even where Urdu language experts may be hired as for the film, they speak Indian Urdu, which comes from the UP or Hyderabad. The Urdu spoken in Pakistan comes from the Punjab, the Sindh, and Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa. It is as different as the Hindi spoken in Mumbai is from the Hindi spoken in the UP, as the aristocratic culture of the UP is

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[585] 7.02 percent (Pakistan Census 1951, p.71), 7.08 percent (Pakistan Census 2017)
(Govt. of Pakistan. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. 7th Population & Housing Census 2023: National Census Report, p. 138, Table 4.14)
http://www.pbs.gov.pk/census

[586] If UP-Urdu is the Kings English then Pakistani-Urdu is Hibernian English in accent, culture and temperament.

[587] Salutations

[588] "Sidharth Malhotra gets trolled for being the cringiest Pakistani stereotype in 'spy thriller' film Mission Majnu - How many adaabs is too many adaabs?" Images DAWN, January 11, 2023.
https://images.dawn.com/news/1191378/sidharth-malhotra-gets-trolled-for-being-the-cringiest-pakistani-stereotype-in-spy-thriller-film-mission-majnu

from the current culture of the Punjab. Brilliant director Anubhav Sinha unexpectedly shows a Pakistani Hindu family in "Tum bin 2", speaking formal Urdu, dressed in formal Lakhnavi aristocratic garb for an informal gathering, a most unlikely occurrence. The Urdu accent of many Indian actors is studied, unnatural and unconvincing, at the very least accented, even Hindi words, which would never be used by Pakistanis, are used.[589] The films where there are no jarring notes in language and pronunciation tend to be those with Pakistani actors.[590] Although individual female characters are presented as feisty, women collectively are presented more conservatively than is the case, the excellent film *Filmistan* (2012), even *Bajrangi Bhaijan* (2015) still shows rural women in hijab, highlighting a lack of exposure to Pakistan. Some of these films, may be positively inclined, and present Pakistanis as cultured, elegant, and aristocratic, although such a portrayal exoticizes, and exoticisation is a denial of sameness. The other side of this aristocratic elegance is feudalism and effeteness. Although the kajal-wearing, bearded frenzied mullah is a most frequently used stereotype, the "adaabing-janabing" genuflecting young person speaking Lakhnavi-Urdu is probably an even more inaccurate portrayal of Pakistan.

Portrayal of the "Common Pakistani" as against the Pakistani rulers

There is a constant theme of ordinary Pakistanis, differentiating them from figures representing the might of the Pakistani state. Even those hostile films that show only violent vicious Pakistanis and no sympathetic Pakistani character, mouth this almost as a disclaimer, such as *Zameen* (2003), *Uri* (2019). Some films have a token Pakistani, an anonymous or minor character/s, such as *Gadar* (2001) who will make some anodyne placatory unconvincing remark, while the rest of the film is all about killing Pakistanis killers who have compelled Indians to retaliatory violence. Other films make more of this, by showing and highlighting the disagreements and divisions amongst the civilian government, the military, the ISI, and even *within* the ISI and the military, as the characters of Maj. Qureshi in *Deewar* (2004), Maj Malik in *1971* (2004), Iram in *Agent*

[589] See Chapter 5
[590] Total Siyyapa, the father in Veer Zara

Vinod (2012) and Rubai in *Pathaan* (2023). At a positive level, this shows decent and ordinary Pakistanis, and ISI or the generals are the only villains, and at a negative level it carries shades of the well-worn imperial traditions of divide and rule. At an extreme, this is all exploiting divisions in Pakistan - which have some basis in reality - including ethnic and sectarian divisions ones, and also "exposes" Pakistan doing the same, exploiting ethnic and sectarian divisions in India - which have some basis in reality. In some films, the enemy is ISI, there seems almost no need to mention Pakistan .(*Khakee, Ulajh,* even the Netflix series *IC-814*). Pakistan has become peripheral to the ISI.

Embracing the Other

Despite all the hostility that exists, in the general public, in the official gaze and in the filmic representation of our relationships, the Embrace exists too.

Given our history, the rationale for the existence of Pakistan was always a contentious point, for the secularists because they did not consider religion should be a differentiating factor, and for Hindutva followers because they believed that Mother India should not be divided. There was no reason for any non-Muslim to support the idea; and even Muslims were divided. Most of those who supported Pakistan were recent converts to the idea, as the difference between the 1946 elections and the 1937 elections showed.[591] The carnage and chaos at Partition meant a subcontinent riven apart by hatred, and a severance of the closest of bonds. Even without the claims to Kashmir, there was bound to be hostility.

Out of these, even in a canon which has all this hostility, denial of Pakistani agency, even its right to exist, there is still an element of sameness that goes beyond just a conservative sameness and denial of Pakistani agency, there are still gems and nuggets in the Indian canon, and despite the censorship and the commercial pressures, there are still many films that are watched by people, that accept Pakistanis and Pakistan as a state, by implication or explicitly, and have a reconciliatory message that is based on mutual recognition. It is not a dominant theme, but it is a persistent one, and it is a mistake to see the canon as wholly propogandist and hostile and Indian-chauvinist in nature.

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[591] In 1935, of 1585 seats in the Punjab, the Unionist Party won 101 seats and ML won 100, less than 25 percent of the Muslim vote, and could not form a govt in a single province. Hardy, 1972, 224 and Hermann Kulke; Dietmar Rothermund (2004) 314.

In the current dispensation, this goes against both state narratives, the hostility is from both sides, and there is no readymade lazy story about political rapprochement or reconciliation, there are no stereotypes for this! So the reconciliatory films find creative and inventive ways to express this. In recent years *Bajrangi Bhaijan* (2015), a totally nonpolitical story, was a blockbuster, where a militant Hindu picks up a little lost child to protect her, grows to love her, only to find that she is a Pakistani, and undertakes to return her to her family in Pakistan. Aamir Khan said that it is the best film of Salman Khan's career.[592] *PK* (2014), a film against "god-men", while negating the two-nation theory, shows a side-story romance between an Indian and a Pakistani, and was another all-time blockbuster in India, and sold out in every theatre in Lahore and Islamabad on the first three days. *Ek tha Tiger* (2015) is a love story of two dedicated RAW and ISI agents who decide that hostility is outdated. *Bharat* (2019) is the story of a brother and sister separated in childhood in the Partition riots, and others like them, and their reconciliation, and was commercially successful. *Pathaan* (2023) is absolutely political, and portrays a loyal Pakistani ISI agent who rebels against her agency, and cooperates with India, with all its flaws, for the greater good of both countries and of humanity. The box office for *Pathaan* (2023) broke all existing records.[593] It was a comeback film for Shahrukh Khan, Indian cinema's top superstar, after a break of five years which had been preceded by three flops (and hits and semi-hits) in 2016 and 2017. [594] To use this theme to stage a comeback is a mark of the self-confidence of the actor (often called upon to publicly assert his loyalty to India because he is a Muslim) and also the importance of this issue. *Indoo ki jawani* (2020) received a lot of flak on many counts, including its generally positive portrayal of a Pakistani. And as this thesis goes to be submitted *Ulajh* (2024) hit the screens, a film premised on the Pakistani PM visiting India to further peace, (shades of *Hindustan ki kasam* -1999), less sycophantic and more believable), where even the ISI is not the worst villain, it is other vested interests. There are many such heartwarming films.

One of the most prevalent methods of Embracing is the establishment or the invoking of kinship. There is a long and living tradition in the Indian subcontinent of "making" someone your sister/brother/mother/child/relation, a modern day remnant is the use of

[592] The Economic Times, 19.07.2015.
[593] Till SRK's next film *Jawaan* (2023)
[594] Jha, Anupama, 18.01.2025

the word Aunty and Uncle for elders, direct translation from Indian words, it is not polite to call someone just by their name except in cases of absolute equality or intimacy, in cases of non-kinship, -ji, Sahib, Bibi etc are often suffixed to show respect, there is always a choice about whether to choose a kinship term or not. A formal and still very current form is *raksha-bandhan*, the tying of the *rakhee*, where a female ties a thread on a male, signifying a sibling relationship, the choice is the woman's, this was used in Bengal as a political tool to signify unity between Hindus and Muslims, specially as a symbol of resistance against the British policy of dividing communities, at the time of the partition of Bengal, initiated by Tagore. Gandhiji too advocated such a bond between Muslims and Hindus, as he was against marriage between the two communities. *Rakhee*-brothering is shown in *Dharmputra*, in *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973), in *Ma Tujhe Salaam* (2002) between a woman hostage and a Kashmiri terrorist. *Raksha-bandhan*, marriage, adoption and other such customs extend kinship bonds, these are understood, accepted, almost quasi-legal practices that are practiced in all over the Indo-Pak sub-continent, there are less formal customs to establish sisterhood and brotherhood, like exchanging of *duppatas* or turbans, which may not be taken as seriously. There is a hierarchy of relationships, as there is of everything in the subcontinent, and each kin-word is quite specific,[595]. I have pointed out in the relevant chapters where these underpin the Indo-Pak relationship, as in *Upkar* (1967) and *Gadar* (2001), where India is the father or the elder brother. It is sometimes self-interest, as in *Hindustan ki kasam,* (1973) where the Pakistani woman is offered a *rakhee* to tie on to the wrist of her Indian soldier escort, as protection for herself, as her brother he must protect her. And sometimes this is based on a strengthening of bonds of love and affection, as in *Dharmputra* (1961)*, Chhalia* (1960). *Raksha-bandhan* and calling someone "brother", are sometimes protection against sexual relationships (as in *Lahore*-1949*)*. The use of the word *bhai* (brother) can be a simple politeness, which at once can be turned into something deadly serious – as when the Indian traveller calls his Pakistani taxi driver *bhai* and then offers him the fare, the taxi driver is offended and says, "Does one pay a brother doing something for you?" *Hindustan ki kasam* (1973) shows both the blood relationship, as well as the tying of the *rakhee*, as well as Indians and Pakistanis fighting each other as "brother fighting brother". Sometimes this is also used to establish hierarchy, as to Pakistan as being the "younger

[595] *Taya* means fathers elder brother, *Nani* is maternal grandmother, *devar* is husband's younger brother, *jeth* is the elder brother, *saali* is wife's sister

brother", and also Paternalism, as when India is the father (or mother) of Pakistan, (*Gadar*-2001*, Refugee*-1999*, Mother India*-1957*, Upkar- 1967, Dil bole hadippa-2009*, etc). *BhaagMb (2012)* and *Ek tha Tiger* both evoke the *bhabi* (brother's wife) relationship, and so Milkha is *chacha* (Uncle-father's brother) to Sampreet's son. *Hindustan ki kasam* (1999) is the story of an Indian and a Pakistani twin. And of course marriage is also such a relationship, used in a number of films, a relationship with a twist - honour.

Kinship too is complicated, not always reconciliatory, as for example when it is paternalistic and hierarchical. There is frequent reference to India and Pakistan as two estranged brothers, the younger brother who is creating the estrangement always viewed in a hostile light, the elder brother is faultless, mature and patient. Nevertheless, the kinship is not denied – so far, anyway. Kinship is not limited to, but is the most obvious example of the Embrace.

Contribution of this study to Existing Literature and possibilities for Further Research

Above, I have already discussed the dearth of literature of the subject of the treatment of Pakistan in Hindi cinema. With the exception of 3 books (one extremely recent)[596] and a handful of articles, there is no body of literature in this particular area. With the exception of the last 2 books, the articles all discuss a limited number of films. And with the exception of a few articles, the dominant narrative is framed with an Indian reference. This study provides a detailed and holistic study of the complete canon, designs a rigorous typology, and almost uniquely, reflects the Pakistani gaze.

I have also referred above to areas in which there is much more research is needed. But even beyond these, there is a host of further research that can be undertaken based on this thesis. Each theme and each trope can be explored in greater detail, a single trope can be applied to the whole canon, or perhaps more productively by focusing on smaller groups

[596] Bharat and Kumar (eds), *Filming the Line of Control,* Routledge, 2008 and Bharat, *Shooting Terror*, 2018, Routledge, 2018, and Bharat, *Hindi Cinema and Pakistan,* Routledge, 2024

of films. A smaller time period, a decade, or a five year period, or different periods would also allow more detailed analysis. These can then be more concretely related to political developments, as a smaller group of films would allow more in-depth analysis of its gestation period, and the decision-makers involved. Films can also be chosen on the basis of the decision-makers and the personnel involved, by director or actor, and comparisons made, which would also allow a sharper analysis of the film industry and the power politics involved. Single films or groups of films could be explored, with a further in-depth analysis of the underlying motivations of films, other than simple commercial success, this would be most productive for those who could have access to the key decision makers involved. Films can be grouped on the basis of whether they were successful or otherwise and analysed from that point of view. This research has been a broad-stroke study, seeking to establish a foundation and background for all the relevant films, there is a huge scope for more fine-tuned analysis.

Newer films, released after this research was completed, can be analysed on the basis of this typology.

Very importantly, there is a huge dearth of audience impact studies, barring the stellar work of Shakuntala Banaji. Studies of Indian and Pakistani audiences, as well as Indian and Pakistani diasporas are much needed and could fill a very big gap.

And while this research is rooted in India and Pakistan, and as such in the Indian subcontinent, perhaps some of this typology may be applicable to other post-colonial and/or political divisions, most obviously Ireland, perhaps East and West Germany, or further afield, where there are situations of Othering out of Sameness.

Concluding remarks

India views Hindi cinema as part of its soft power in the region and the world. The Pakistani state has made every effort to resist it. This has been entirely unsuccessful in practical terms, but Pakistanis seem to have an inbuilt and healthy resistance at least to their own portrayal, even if they are influenced by other aspects of the films. Despite the incursion of Turkish cinema and serials, an increase in Pakistani films, and an increasing interest in South Indian and Korean cinema, Hindi films still are top favourites in

Pakistan. No doubt they also affect opinion amongst international audiences. But it is in India that they are most influential.

As I have shown, hostile tropes and even hostile films notwithstanding, this has always been leavened by a substantial representation of friendly, reconciliatory and hopeful tropes and films, catering to both audiences, but also desirous of breaking out of this deadlock. And since cinema is both cause and effect, it is with these films, with this embrace, that hope lies.

It is clear that Indian Hindi Cinema can and does create a hostile othering that draws on hostile tropes of simple villainy, communalism, military confrontation, terrorism sponsorship, war-mongering, fanaticism, extremism, inferiority, immaturity, and duplicity which serve to propel the hostilities into the present and the future.

I hope this work has also shown that substantial sections of this cinema also does create and highlight a common culture, identity and ethics which has the potential to encourage peace and harmony.

American producer Bryce Zabel, with reference to the US and the Arabs, says that Hollywood's films have the " creative expertise to improve relations between our country and the rest of the world"; there is no doubt Bollywood has capacity to do this for our region. What these choices depend on and where they choose to go remains to be seen.

But as Bharat in *Bharat* (2019) says;

> "Our biggest learning …..was that the biggest conflict in the world, can be resolved by talk, love, and Hindi film songs."

> *("…. hamari sab se barri learning ye thhee ke dunya ki barri se barri larai; baat-cheet, pyaar, aur hindi filmon ke gaanon se jeeti jaa saktee hae.")*

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Other Resources

1 Correspondence with Ali Mir, film scholar, lyricist, writer/screen-writer, Professor WPU.
2 Correspondence with Maja Daruwala, d/o Field Marshall Sam Mankeshaw
3 Interview with Amir Haider, Manager, Cineplex, Centaurus, Islamabad, Pakistan, on 17 June 2019
4 Interview with Waseem Altaf

Appendix 1 – List of Films 1

List of Films with an India-Pakistan reference, consulted for this study with year and title translation

(Legend NMoP No mention of Pakistan)
FNF Film Not Found

Year and Film Title	Abbreviation Used	Title Translation
1949 Lahore		Lahore
1951 Andolan		Agitation
1954 Nastik		Atheist
1960 Chhalia		Chhalia (Conman)
1961 Dharmputra		Son of the Faith
1967 Upkar		Beneficence
1970 Prem Pujari		Worshipper of Love
1973 Hindustan ki kasam		I swear by India
1974 Garam Hawa		Scorching Winds
1975 Aakraman		Invasion
1982 Vijeta		Victory
1991 Henna		Henna
1992 Roja		Roja
1994 Mammo		Mammo
1994 Drohkaal		Times of Treason
1996 Dil Jale		The burning heart
1997 Border		Border
1998 Dil Se		From the heart
1998 Train to Pakistan		Train to Pakistan
1999 Shaheed-e-Mohhabat Boota Singh		Martyr to Love Boota Singh
1999 Ao ab laut chalen		Come, let us return
1999 Sarfarosh		Passionate Martyr
1999 Aaya Toofaan		Comes the storm
1999 Earth 1947		Earth 1947
1999 Thakshak		Cobra
1999 Kachche dhaage		Fragile bonds
1999 Hindustan ki kasam		I swear by Hindustan
2000 Pukaar		The Call
2000 Mission Kashmir		Mission Kashmir
2000 Fiza		Fiza
2000 Hey Ram		Oh Ram
2000 Phir bhi dil hae Hindustani		Still, the heart is Indian
2000 Refugee		Refugee
2001 Gadar		Rebellion
2001 Indian		Indian
2001 Shaheed-i-Kargil (FNF)		Martyr of Kargil
2002 Bharat Bhagya Vidhata		Dispenser of India's destiny

2002 Ma Tujhe salam	Mother, I salute you
2002 Ye dil aashiqana	The heart is a lover
2003 The Hero	The Hero
2003 Qayamat	Day of Judgment/Apocalypse
2003 Zameen	Land
2003 LOC Kargil	LOC Kargil
2003 Border Hindustan ka	The border of India
2003 Pinjar	The Cage
2003 Dil Pardesi ho gaya	The heart is a stranger
2003 Dhoop	Sunshine
2003 Stumped	Stumped
2003 Jaal	The Trap
2003 Hawayien	Winds
2003 Silence please! (FNF)	Silence please!
2004 Main Hoon Na	I am here
2004 Veer Zara	Veer-Zara
2004 The Little Terrorist	The Little Terrorist
2004 16 December	16-Dec
2004 Asambhav	Impossible
2004 Deewar	Wall
2004 Lakshya	Target
2004 Agnipankh	Wings of Fire
2004 Black Friday	Black Friday
2004 Ab tumhare hawale watan saathiyo	We entrust this nation to you, comrades
2004 Khakee	Khaki
2004 Dev	Dev
2005 Yahan	Here
2005 Tango Charlie	Tango Charlie
2005 Insaan	Human
2006 Fanaa	Destroyed
2006 Kabul Express	Kabul Express
2006 Sarhad Paar	Across the border
2006 Rang de Basanti	Colour me saffron
2007 Dhan dhana dhan Goal	Ole ole ole Goal
2007 Awarapan	Vagrancy
2007 Jhoom Barabar Jhoom	Keep on dancing
2007 Chak de	Go for it
2007 Dhoka (NMoP)	Betrayal
2007 1971	1971
2007 Namastey London	Good day, London
2007 Anwar	Anwar
2007 Partition	Partition
2008 Hijack (NMoP)	Hijack
2008 Black and white (NMoP)	Black and white
2008 Contract	Contract
2008 Shaurya (NMoP)	Valour
2008 Mumbai Meri jaan	Mumbai, my love
2009 Dil bole hadippa	The heart says Hurray
2009 New York	New York
2009 Chintu ji	Chintu ji

2009 Road to Sangam	Road to Sangam
2009 Sikander	Sikander
2009 Tum Mile	I met you
2009 Love aaj kal	Love today and tomorrow
2009 Delhi 6	Delhi 6
2009 Kurbaan	Sacrificed
2010 Jhootha hi sahi	Even if I'm a liar
2010 Sadiyaan	Centuries
2010 Tere bin Laden	Without you, Laden
2010 Tahaan	There, (merciful, tolerance)
2010 Harud	Autumn
2010 Lamhaa	a moment
2010 Lahore	Lahore
2010 My name is Khan	My name is Khan
2010 Peepli Live	Peepli Live
2010 Aakrosh	Outrage
2011 Mausam	Season
2011 No one killed Jessica	No one killed Jessica
2012 Ek tha Tiger	There was a Tiger
2012 English Vinglish	English Vinglish
2012 Jab tak hai jaan	As long as I live
2012 Filmistan	Filmistan
2012 Agent Vinod	Agent Vinod
2012 The attacks of 26/11	The attacks of 26/11
2012 Teri meri Kahani	Your story and mine
2013 D-Day	D-Day
2013 Holiday	Holiday
2013 Bhaag Milkha Bhaag	Run Milkha Run
2013 War chhod na Yaar	Quit the war, bro
2013 Shahid	Shahid
2013 Children of War	The Children of war
2014 Kya Dilli kya Lahore	What Delhi, what Lahore
2014 PK	PK (Tipsy)
2014 Total Siyapa	Complete chaos
2014 Zed Plus	Zed Plus
2014 Haider	Haider
2014 Gunday	Hoodlums
2015 Baby	Baby
2015 Bajrangi Bhaijan	Dear Brother, Bajrangi
2015 Phantom	Phantom
2015 Calender Girls	Calender Girls
2015 Welcome 2 Karachi	Welcome to Karachi
2016 Happy bhag jayegi	Happy will run away
2016 Neerja	Neerja
2016 Udta Punjab	Flying Punjab
2016 Sarabjit	Sarabjit
2016 Dishoom	Bang
2016 Tere bin Laden 2	Without you, Laden, 2
2016 Mango Dreams	Mango dreams
2016 Airlift	Airlift

2017 Sameer	Sameer
2017 The Ghazi attack	The Ghazi attack
2017 Naam Shabana	The name is Shabana
2017 Tiger Zinda hae	Tiger lives
2017 Kashmir (nmop)	Kashmir daily
2017 Guest in London	Guest in London
2017 Begum Jaan (FNF)	Begum Jaan
2017 Oye Firangi	Oye Foreigner
2018 Gold	Gold
2018 Raazi	Raazi
2018 Tigers	Tigers
2018 Mulk	Country
2018 Manto	Manto
2018 Parmanu	Atom
2018 Omerta	Omerta
2018 Genius	Genius
2018 Lashtam Pashtam	Much Ado/Topsy Turvy
2019 Batla House	Batla House
2019 No fathers in Kashmir	No fathers in Kashmir
2019 Street Dancer 3D	Street Dancer 3D
2019 Uri	Uri
2019 Khandani Shafakhana	Family clinic
2019 Kalank	Disgrace
2019 Mudda 370 JK	Issue 370 Jammu Kashmir
2019 The Great Indian Escape (FNF)	The great Indian escape
2019 Blank	Blank
2019 India’s Most Wanted	India’s most wanted
2020 Bharat	Bharat
2020 Shikara	Shikara (Kashmiri boat)
2020 London Confidential	London Confidential
2021 Indoo ki jawani	Indoo’s youth
2021 Romeo, Akbar and Walter	Romeo,Akbar,Walter
2021 Sardar ka grandson	Grandson of Sardar
2021 Lahore confidential	Lahore confidential
2021 Bellbottom	Bellbottom
2021 State of Siege	State of siege
2021 Bhuj	Bhuj
2022 Ram Setu	Ram’s bridge
2022 Kashmir Files	Kashmir Files
2022 Shershaah	Shershaah
2022 Codename Tiranga	Codename Tricolour
2022 Verses of War	Verses of War
2022 Lal Singh Chadda	Lal Singh Chadda
2022 Jogi	Jogi
2023 Sam Bahadur	Sam Bahadur
2023 Tiger 3	Tiger 3
2023 Mission Majnu	Mission Majnu
2023 Pathan	Pathan
2023 Bheed	Crowd
2023 Pippa	Pippa

2023 Gadar 2	Rebellion 2
2024 Fighter	Fighter
2024 Article 370	Article 370
2024 Ulajh	Tangle

Appendix 2 – List of Films 2

List of Films (with India-Pakistan reference) showing the gap years

(Legend NMoP No mention of Pakistan
FNF Film Not Found)

Year and Film Title
1949 Lahore
1950
1951 Andolan
1952
1953
1954 Nastik
1955
1956
1957
1958
1959
1960 Chhalia
1961 Dharmputra
1962
1963
1964
1965
1966
1967 Upkar
1968
1969
1970 Prem Pujari
1971
1972
1973 Hindustan ki kasam
1974 Garam Hawa
1975 Aakraman
1976
1977
1978
1979
1980
1981
1982 Vijeta
1983
1984
1985
1986

1987
1988
1989
1990
1991 Henna
1992 Roja
1993

1994– 2 films
1994 Mammo
1994 Drohkaal

1995 – 2 films
1996 Dil Jale
1997 Border

1998 – 2 films
1998 Dil Se
1998 Train to Pakistan

1999 – 8 films
1999 Shaheed-e-Mohhabat Boota Singh
1999 Ao ab laut chalen
1999 Sarfarosh
1999 Aaya Toofaan
1999 Earth
1999 Thakshak
1999 Kachche dhaage
1999 Hindustan ki kasam

2000 – 6 films
2000 Pukaar
2000 Mission Kashmir
2000 Fiza
2000 Hey Ram
2000 Phir bhi dil hae Hindustani
2000 Refugee

2001 – 3 films
2001 Gadar
2001 Indian
2001 Shaheed-i-Kargil (FNF)

2002– 3 films
2002 Bharat Bhagya Vidhata
2002 Ma Tujhe salaam
2002 Ye dil aashiqana

2003 – 12 films
2003 The Hero
2003 Qayamat
2003 Zameen
2003 LOC Kargil
2003 Border Hindustan ka
2003 Pinjar
2003 Dil Pardesi ho gaya
2003 Dhoop
2003 Stumped
2003 Jaal
2003 Hawayien
2003 Silence please! (FNF)

2004 – 12 films
2004 Main Hoon Na
2004 Veer Zara
2004 The Little Terrorist
2004 16 December
2004 Asambhav
2004 Deewar
2004 Lakshya
2004 Agnipankh
2004 Black Friday
2004 Ab tumhare havale watan saathiyo
2004 Khakee
2004 Dev

2005 – 3 films
2005 Yahan
2005 Tango Charlie
2005 Insaan

2006 – 4 films
2006 Fanaa
2006 Kabul Express
2006 Sarhad Paar
2006 Rang de Basanti

2007– 10 films
2007 Dhan dhana dhan Goal
2007 Awarapan
2007 Jhoom Barabar Jhoom
2007 Chak de
2007 Dhoka (NMoP)
2007 1971
2007 Namastey London
2007 Anwar
2007 Partition

2008 – 5 films
2008 Hijack (NMoP)
2008 Black and white (NMoP)
2008 Contract
2008 Shaurya (NMoP)
2008 Mumbai Meri jaan

2009 – 9 films
2009 Dil bole hadippa
2009 New York
2009 Chintu ji
2009 Road to Sangam
2009 Sikander
2009 Kurbaan
2009 Tum Mile
2009 Love aaj kal
2009 Delhi 6

2010- 10 films
2010 Jhootha hi sahi
2010 Sadiyaan
2010 Tere bin Laden
2010 Tahaan
2010 Harud
2010 Lamhaa
2010 Lahore
2010 My name is Khan
2010 Peepli Live
2010 Aakrosh

2011- 2 films
2011 Mausam
2011 No one killed Jessica

2012 – 7 films
2012 Ek tha Tiger
2012 English Vinglish
2012 Jab tak hai jaan
2012 Filmistan
2012 Agent Vinod
2012 The attacks of 26/11
2012 Teri meri Kahani

2013 – 7 films
2013 D-Day
2013 Holiday
2013 Bhaag Milkha Bhaag
2013 War chhod na Yaar
2013 Shahid
2013 The Attacks of 2011
2013 Children of War

2014 – 6 films
2014 Kya Dilli kya Lahore
2014 PK
2014 Total Siyapa
2014 Zed Plus
2014 Haider 2014
2014 Gunday

2015 – 5 films
2015 Baby
2015 Bajrangi Bhaijan
2015 Phantom
2015 Calender Girls
2015 Welcome 2 Karachi

2016 – 8 films
2016 Happy bhag jayegi
2016 Neerja
2016 Udta Punjab
2016 Sarabjit
2016 Dishoom
2016 Tere bin Laden 2
2016 Mango Dreams
2016 Airlift

2017 – 9 films
2017 Sameer
2017 The Ghazi attack
2017 Naam Shabana
2017 Tiger Zinda hae
2017 Kashmir daily
2017 Guest in London
2017 Begum Jaan (FNF)
2017 Oye Firangi

2018 – 8 films
2018 Gold
2018 Raazi
2018 Tigers
2018 Mulk
2018 Manto
2018 Parmanu
2018 Omerta
2018 Genius

2019 – 9 films
2019 Batla House
2019 No fathers in Kashmir
2019 Street Dancer 3D
2019 Uri
2019 Khandani Shafakhana
2019 Kalank
2019 The Great Indian Escape (FNF)
2019 Blank
2019 India's Most Wanted
2019 Mudda 370 Jammu Kashmir

2020 – 3 films
2020 Bharat
2020 Shikara
2020 London Confidential

2021 – 7 films
2021 Indoo ki jawani
2021 Romeo, Akbar and Walter
2021 Sardar ka grandson
2021 Lahore confidential
2021 Bellbottom
2021 State of Siege
2021 Bhuj

2022 – 6 films
2022 Ram Setu
2022 Kashmir Files
2022 Shershaah
2022 Verses of War
2022 Lal Singh Chadda
2022 Jogi

2023 – 7 films
2023 Sam Bahadur
2023 Tiger 3
2023 Mission Majnu
2023 Pathan 2023
2023 Bheed 2023
2023 Pippa
2023 Gadar 2

2024 – 3 films
2024 Fighter
2024 Article 370
2024 Ulajh

Appendix 3 – List of Other films consulted

1921	Bhakta Vidur	The devotion of Vidur
1926	Umaji Naik	Umaji Naik (name of an Indian revolutionary)
1931	Toran	Gateway, Flag, also name
1939	Thyagabhoomi	Land of Sacrifice
1941	Padosi	Neighbour
1942	Apna ghar	Home
1942	Swarajiya	Self-rule
1944	Kismet	Kismet/Destiny
1959	Dhool ka phool	Flower of Dust
1972	Pakeezah	The Pure
1983	Coolie	Coolie/Porter
2000	Phir bhi dil hai hindustani	Still, the heart is Indian
2008	Shaurya	Valour
2015	Bangistan	Bangistan